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MILNOR JONES  
DEACON AND MISSIONARY

Jos. Blount Cheshire



*Jos. Blount Cheshire*  
*Raleigh,*  
*N.C.*

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BY

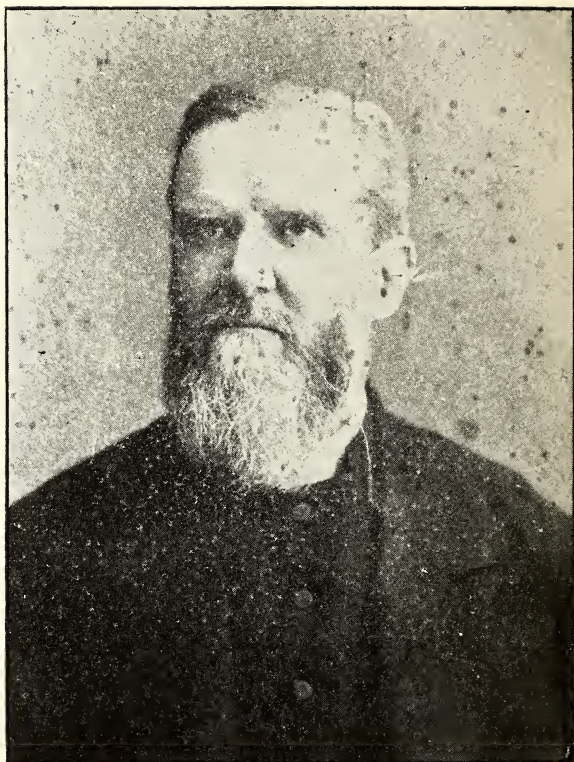
JOS. BLOUNT CHESHIRE

BISHOP OF NORTH CAROLINA





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BISHOP OF NORTH CAROLINA



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## FOREWORD.

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The following account of the life and work of the Rev. Milnor Jones was written in 1916. It was begun with the purpose of making it an obituary notice, to be sent to some one of our Church papers. Such a life seemed worthy of being known beyond the bounds of its own narrow sphere. But though begun with this very limited purpose, the subject refused to be dismissed with so brief a handling. It grew under my hand, until it may seem to some to have outgrown all reasonable proportions. I am quite conscious that some good and judicious people will think me partial and over-appreciative in my estimate of this unusual personality. I shall not complain if I be so judged. I confess that I cannot refrain from admiring and loving good and noble qualities, however mingled with human imperfections. A more serious apprehension is, that I may be thought to have colored and exaggerated certain episodes in the life I endeavor to present. I feel myself that this may be true, in those parts of the narrative which are given upon the authority of others. Where I am myself concerned, the facts are given, not merely from memory, but from **memo-randa** written down at the time, though I am not altogether sure of my estimate of distances in the mountains. But Milnor Jones was so striking a character, and so intense and dramatic in his methods, that he moved the imagination; and his experiences, in his own mind, and in the minds of others, seemed

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to group themselves into dramatic episodes, in which a number of different events may have been combined into one. Such incidents, for example, as his visit to the Seagle family, and his immersion of the young lawyer in Armstrong's Creek, are given in the narrative just as I heard them, and are certainly true in every essential. But each story may in fact be a concentration of more extended experiences into one dramatic scene. I do not know how this may be; but I do know that, so far as I was able, I wrote down what I had learned, and what I myself had seen and heard, with a simple desire to set forth a true narrative of a unique character. I do not apologize for stating frankly his limitations, his errors, and his faults. When a man is really deserving of admiration, the truth is his best commendation. Milnor Jones had nothing hidden in his life; and in writing of him I have but followed his own example of frankness and simple truth. The years which have passed since I wrote the following pages have not altered my feelings or my judgment as therein expressed.

JOS. BLOUNT CHESHIRE.

January 12, 1920.

# MILNOR JONES, DEACON AND MISSIONARY.

By Joseph Blount Cheshire.

## CHAPTER I.

### **His Beginning—Work in South Carolina.**

Men of strongly marked personality make different impressions upon the different persons with whom they are brought into contact.

The Rev. Milnor Jones, deacon, who died in Baltimore the 21st day of February, 1916, seems to the writer of these lines to have been one of the most remarkable men, and in many respects the most effective missionary, he has ever known in close personal association. Wholly lacking in selfish ambition, and preferring to remain a deacon in hard frontier service, and being indeed very deficient in constructive and organizing abilities, his memory did not become identified with any developed and permanent parish or institution. He hewed out paths in the wilderness in which others followed; he gathered material and dug out foundations for builders who came after him. His memorial was only in the hearts of those who knew him, and in churches and missions which even before his death hardly remembered that they owed their beginnings to him.

I knew him from 1883 until the end of the year 1897, but saw him only once after 1897. I was intimately associated with him in his work from 1894 until the end of 1897. I admired him, trusted him, and loved him; and he never failed me in any matter in which I depended on him. He was the soul of loyalty. I feel that I owe it to his memory to say a few words of a life which had in it certainly some elements of greatness, exhibited in a narrow sphere, and of an apostolic simplicity of faith and devotion

not too common among us. And I feel that I owe this duty also to the Church, which he served with a zeal, unselfishness, courage, and unremitting labor seldom equaled and never surpassed within the field of my observation and experience.

He was not a perfect man. I have known a few men and women who, whatever their faults when judged by the clear eyes of Him to Whom we must all give account, were yet perfect to my limited vision; a very few such, yet some few. Milnor Jones was not one of these. Rather he was a man of quite glaring imperfections and faults. I am endeavoring to speak the exact truth, so I must say this. When he turned from a life of careless irreligion and began to walk in a better way, he deliberately chose to work among the very poorest and most uncultivated people of our mountain section; and he literally took his place close beside them, and made himself one with them in sympathy and habitual association. He endeavored to enter into their life and sentiments, to know them inwardly, and to acquire their modes of thought, feeling, and expression, so that he might understand them, and **that they might understand him.** He did not become all things to all men, because he was not the great Apostle whose mission was to all. He remained by preference in the lowest order of the ministry, and he made himself all things to the lowly whom he had chosen for his own. And so he did not escape that assimilation (in some degree) to those whom he thus chose for his associates, which might have been anticipated. To cultivated and refined sensibilities he at times appeared to be rude, and coarse, and violent; and indeed he was so. It was the result of his deliberate effort to enter into the lives and hearts of those to whom he would fain carry the Gospel, "that by all means he might save some." But he was never flippant, or ribald, or resentful of any personal slight or injury, or really irreverent.

There was an intense earnestness, gravity and seriousness in his manner, in the deep tones of his voice, and in the rather sad expression of his dark eye, which gave to his rudest and homeliest illustrations and arguments, and to his most violent utterances, an honest reality and solemnity felt by **all those for whom he spoke**. He was not a popular preacher. Many, no doubt, who came to scoff remained to pray. He made powerful impressions on his hearers. But also many went away furious and raging with resentment. He had his own ideas of how best to get at the minds and consciences of his hearers. And, deacon as he was, he did not scruple on occasion to tell his bishop that the sermon he (the bishop) had just preached "did no more good than pouring water on a duck's back." And his bishop is proud to record the incident, although he thinks it was a pretty fair sermon. He is proud to have had a good and loyal and honest deacon, who could thus speak to him without the least thought of offense on either side. And, being such as he was, he exercised his ministry for something like a quarter of a century, and went in and out among the people; and certainly in the mountains of North Carolina did a work whose results are now greater than are seen or realized by those who have taken his place; and he did his work in a spirit which elicits this effort to do honor to his memory.

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Milnor Jones was born in Chestertown, Md., November 10, 1848. He was the son of the Rev. Clement Frederick Jones, a native, I believe, of Philadelphia, who spent many years of his ministry in Chestertown, Maryland, and who, from 1857 until his death in 1877, was a clergyman of South Carolina, residing near Glenn Springs. The Rev. Clement Jones married in Chestertown a daughter of the



Hon. Ezekiel Chambers, a member of the United States Senate, and an eminent member among such contemporaries as Clay, Calhoun, Benton, and Webster, and for many years one of the most distinguished members of the General Convention. Milnor Jones was educated in the local schools of his father's place of residence, and in Washington College, Chestertown. He grew up amid cultivated and refined surroundings, and under the best social and religious influences. But he had "a wild streak in his blood," as men say, and grew up bold, reckless, and, to a great extent, undisciplined. In early manhood he went to Texas, where he lived for some years, practiced law, and married. The illness and disability of his father recalled him to some seriousness of thought, and then an accident, by which he came near losing his life, produced a total change in his character. While riding a wild and dangerous horse, the bit broke, and in consequence he lost control of the animal, and was thrown with such violence to the ground that for weeks he lay in a helpless and critical condition. There came upon him, during the long hours of this painful experience, a deep sense of religious duty, together with a very solemn realization of the sin and folly of his wasted life, so that he determined, if he should recover, to devote his life to the service of God in the ministry. Singleness of purpose and directness of thought were his special characteristics. No sooner had he regained his health and strength than he proceeded, in May, 1873, to the University of the South, at Sewanee, and began his studies in preparation for Holy Orders. But he could not wait for ordination before beginning the work to which he had now devoted himself. From the very first he began to seek out those, anywhere and everywhere, to whom he might bring the truth and power of the Gospel, and he became in effect a preacher wherever he could find hearers. The many deep coves indenting the

slopes of the great Cumberland plateau, upon which the University of the South is situated, inhabited by a people who had been for generations far remote from the education and culture of the more accessible portions of the country, afforded him a boundless field for the exercise of his missionary zeal. The clergymen connected with the University, whose proper duties were manifold and onerous, found his demands upon them for services rather troublesome. One stout and florid instructor, who, having no special pastoral duties in the institution, was frequently called upon by him, never ceased while he lived to speak, half in complaint and more than half in admiration, of how "Milnor Jones made me almost walk my legs off, up and down the mountain-sides," to baptize the candidates whom his diligence and pertinacity had always in waiting. The directness of his appeals and his untiring persistence, with the surprising success ensuing, gave rise to many stories which are yet remembered and repeated. His habitual absorption in the one thought of his religious work, and his direct and homely appeals in the most vigorous language he could command, seemed often grotesque and humorous in contrast with our common careless and conventional religion; and a ludicrous turn is given to many of the stories told of him, then and later. But there was never any doubt of his sincerity and earnestness, nor of the reality and value of the results of his work.

While at Sewanee, Bishop Quintard appointed him to work as a lay missionary in the mining camp at Tracy City, in which work he was associated with a fellow-student, John Kershaw, now the distinguished rector of St. Michael's Church, Charleston. Dr. Kershaw, referring to that period, says: "My personal acquaintance with him began in 1873 or 1874, and soon ripened into warm friendship. My

impression is that he secured the money to erect a chapel there (at Tracy City).''

He was ordered deacon by Bishop Howe, of South Carolina, May 14, 1876, and spent some months working as city missionary in Charleston. Dr. Kershaw writes: "In visiting the City Hospital and Almshouse, and elsewhere in the slums of the city, he saw so much misery and distress that, as he told me, he could not endure it; he thought it would drive him mad to stay and witness such suffering." With the permission of the bishop, he therefore returned to his father's house at Glenn Springs, in Spartanburg District. For a year or so he did voluntary missionary work in that neighborhood, also giving regular and valuable assistance to the Rev. Dr. McCullough, the rector, in the church on Sundays. He continued this irregular and unattached work apparently some two or three years, becoming rector of the Church of the Advent, Spartanburg, shortly before the Diocesan Convention of 1879. Before becoming rector at Spartanburg, he reports to the Convention: Baptisms—infants 272, adults 38, of whom he states that large numbers of them "live in places inaccessible to the services of the Church."

In those days most of our dioceses and parishes, especially in the South, were rather slow and old-fashioned in their ideas and methods, and it is no disparagement of the Diocese of South Carolina to say that its people were eminently of this spirit—conservative, as we say. Milnor Jones was emphatically not a conservative. He was a fresh breeze from Texas, by way of the Tennessee mountains and Sewanee, and he must have given many a thrill and shock to the social and ecclesiastical proprieties of his old diocese, and of Spartanburg and Glenn Springs, where his father had for so many years served after so very different a fashion.

From the beginning of his ministry he was much

interested in behalf of the negroes. South Carolina Churchmen have ever, in their way, been zealous in religious work for the negroes; and their way has been in many respects a most admirable way. The young deacon had no difficulty in enlisting the best people of his parish as workers in his negro Sunday-school, and he had very soon a house full of little black children, duly distributed into classes, and assigned to earnest and competent teachers. But he rather took their breath away when, immediately upon beginning the school, he insisted on baptizing the whole body of pupils (whose parents were mostly Baptists), requiring the teachers to act as sponsors, and doing this upon the plea that the children must all be taught the Church Catechism, and that in order to be able to say the catechism they must be baptized, because the very first question, after learning the child's name, is: "Who gave you this name?" and the child must answer: "My sponsors in baptism."

He was equally interested in the poorer and more uneducated white people of the country, and was enthusiastic and practical in his labors among them, and everywhere and always commanded their confidence and attracted them to the Church. In 1879 he reports: Baptisms—infants, white, 14; colored, 48; confirmations, 14; services, 225. In 1880: Baptisms—infants 83, adults 6; confirmations, 17; services, 200. He reports three mission Sunday-schools, two for whites and one for negroes (the colored school mentioned above) in the suburbs of Spartanburg, and regular preaching appointments covering every night in the week in the regions lying around, and especially towards the mountains.

This unexampled zeal and activity, and especially his eagerness to baptize all the children upon whom he could lay his hands, made a great impression upon all who knew him. Unfortunately, he had the faults of his peculiar temperament, and was more

eager and successful in winning the confidence and securing the loyal attachment of his converts than in training and instructing them. As he brought in his recruits in unusual numbers, and from classes and communities which had never before been in contact with the Church, we may be reasonably sure that they were for the most part without any great familiarity with the methods of worship in the Church, and but little qualified for the ordinary parochial routine of an old and cultivated congregation. It was a case of putting new wine into old bottles, and Mr. Jones's peculiar methods and extraordinary activity and success produced a somewhat perplexing and embarrassing situation. He began to feel hampered by the unavoidable conventionalities of his position. He thought that he was not sufficiently supported in his work. He said that the bishop was alarmed at the numbers he was bringing into the Church, and advised him "to go slow." There was no better man than Bishop Howe and few wiser bishops; and doubtless Mr. Jones needed all the advice and admonition given him. But he was constitutionally unable to understand such advice, and did not at all believe in "going slow." He soon emancipated himself from the shackles of parochial administration, with its vestries and wardens and leading families and local traditions and formalisms, and sought a free range and a free hand, first in the vicinity of Spartanburg, and then in the adjacent mountains of North Carolina.

In his report to the Convention of 1880 he says that he has "Resigned the charge of the Church of the Advent some weeks since, and [is] devoting much time to missionary work, with encouraging results. The following are the regular appointments, in addition to Sunday services: Vicinity of Hog Back Mountain, Monday nights; suburbs of Spartanburg (at Mrs. Simons's), Tuesday nights;



at County Almshouse, Wednesday afternoons; at Valley Falls and vicinity, Wednesday nights; at Bomar College, Thursday nights; at Lone Oak, Friday nights." He says he is having parochial schools for children, and that he distributes many Prayer Books and tracts.

At this time, his father having died in 1877, he was possessed of a considerable estate, and made investments in mountain lands in Polk and Rutherford Counties, North Carolina. He was an astonishingly poor business man, and it may be said here, once for all, that he very soon managed to lose the whole of his property, except some invested funds, of which he received only the interest. Once and again at subsequent periods of his life the death of relatives brought him some considerable sums of money, but he soon spent what he had. His business interests, however, after he resigned the parish at Spartanburg, brought him into North Carolina, and wherever he came he preached. Becoming interested in the people of this primitive section, and finding the free and irresponsible work of an itinerant missionary more suited to his temperament and to his capacities than more regular work, he soon established his headquarters at Tryon, in Polk County, and gave up his work in South Carolina, though his family remained for a year or two longer in their Spartanburg home. In 1881 he made his last report to the Convention of South Carolina. He says: "My work for the last twelve months has been greatly blessed. I have preached at the five places (apparently referring to the places mentioned in his report of 1880) generally weekly, besides other occasional appointments. In addition, I have a regular weekly appointment at Tryon City, and one at Columbus, N. C. Sunday-schools in operation at four points. I have received no pay for my services, not having applied for any. I have preached more than three hundred times, and am now preaching on

an average of once a day throughout the year.” This was the last year of his connection with the Diocese of South Carolina. The above quotation shows that in the spring of 1881 he had made a definite connection with North Carolina, and seems to imply that he had his two Sunday appointments, one in Tryon and the other in Columbus, the county-seat of Polk County. By 1882 he had relinquished all his appointments in South Carolina, and in August, 1882, he was transferred to the Diocese of North Carolina.

## CHAPTER II.

### **North Carolina: Polk, Rutherford, and Henderson Counties.**

While his family remained in Spartanburg, Mr. Jones made his usual abode in Tryon with Dr. and Mrs. Cureton, the only Church family then residing in Polk County, as I am informed.

Tryon is in direct communication with Spartanburg, only 27 miles distant on the railroad, so that he could spend part of each week with his family. It seems to have been with the beginning of his work in North Carolina that Mr. Jones fully developed his peculiar and characteristic methods. He was not at all a pastor; he had little or no power of administration or of organization. He never aspired to Priests' Orders, or felt any vocation that way. He used to say that the Lord had sent him to preach the Gospel and to baptize. He had no desire for a parish or for a fixed field or work, or even, so far as I could judge, for a settled and permanent place of abode. He liked to be going. His field could not be too large, nor his appointments too many. He wished to be a pioneer, and to move on to wider fields when the work which he had begun had been organized and put upon a regular course of administration. And he liked to choose his own points of attack. He had his own methods, and he chose unlikely places. One of his first appointments in the country near Tryon was at a country liquor shop and distillery, the most depraved locality in all the section around. There he attacked intemperance and lawlessness and other prevalent forms of immorality. And he kept it up until he had driven the liquor shop out of business. He had an eye and a heart for the picturesque and the romantic. On the first Fourth of July, after he began work in North

Carolina, he made an appointment for service on the top of Tryon Mountain, and preached there to a great gathering of the mountain people.

The county jail was one of his regular places of visitation, and he made more than one valued friend among its occasional inmates. The prevalent popular opinion as to the corruption and venality of the local officials in the administration of the revenue laws, and the general feeling among the uneducated mountaineers, that a man had a natural right to do as he would with his own, made many a man in that section an offender against the Federal statutes, who was by no means a hardened or even a conscious criminal. Mr. Jones was uncompromising in his testimony against intemperance and against lawlessness of all kinds; but he could appreciate the difficulties, and could understand the ignorance, of the mountain people, and he had a heart to pity all kinds of suffering, especially the sorrows of the poor and ignorant. His kindness and sympathy shown to the prisoners in Polk County jail, in Columbus, opened many a cabin door to him, and many a friendly heart. He soon made himself known and his influence felt throughout the county and in the adjoining counties of Henderson on one side and Rutherford on the other. He was constantly in the saddle, traversing the country and visiting the people in their homes in the valleys and on the mountainsides.

At this period his preaching was chiefly directed against drunkenness, lawlessness, and the common forms of open vice prevalent among uneducated, scattered and uncultivated people, where the young and ignorant are without the protection of strong public opinion and the safeguards of cultivated social order. But his devotion to children, and his desire to gather them all into Sunday-schools, and, above all, his efforts to bring them all to holy bap-

tism, soon brought him into conflict and controversy with the Baptists, and he gradually developed a skill and a power as a controversial preacher, which greatly extended his reputation, but was eventually a great hindrance to his usefulness. Dr. Kershaw says of him in this connection: "He had a mind of extraordinary quickness of perception, a fine memory, a vocabulary of wide range, and wonderful energy, dauntless courage, and a personality of great strength and influence. His legal training made him a special pleader of much power. He knew his Bible from cover to cover, and while his heart was kindness itself, he loved controversy." Perhaps his most admirable quality as a controversialist was an imperturbable temper and a perfect freedom from sensitiveness or resentment for anything done or said against himself; with an admirable turn of humor, which never failed to seize and utilize, to the full, any opening by which his opponent might be placed in an absurd or ludicrous position, and driven from the field by ridicule or sarcasm. Therefore, to me, he never seemed a very **fair** controversialist. He was wonderfully effective, and his own feeling was that he was maintaining the truth, and if any contumacious opposer of the truth obstructed his path, he would get rid of him and put him out of his way, by the readiest method he could find, so that his work might not be hindered. Whether the argument was sound and to the point, or whether it was only such as would demolish his adversary, did not seem to him very material, so he got rid of the adversary. He did not argue to get at the truth. He already had the truth, and his argument with an opponent was simply to shut the opponent's mouth and dispose of him, that he might go on with his work. Not but what his positions were usually well taken, his arguments sound, and his reasoning accurate—only he did not seem to look upon controversy



as a means of discovering or displaying the truth but as a means of getting rid of a nuisance in the form of an opposer of the truth. He was absolutely loyal and devoted to the Church, with a love and devotion beyond what he felt for anything else on earth; and his utter dedication and consecration to his work was such as is seldom seen. He had no other thought or desire or purpose but of doing the work to which he was called; and any reflection upon the Church seemed to him an outrage against his Master and the Head of the Church, which it was his duty to repel and denounce. I never observed in him any resentment or feeling of anger for any injurious charge or allegation concerning himself, though at times he experienced undeserved contumely and reproach. He felt the sting of such treatment, but seemed absolutely without the least feeling of resentment, or the most distant approach to any inclination to anger. But let any man speak reproachfully of the Church or of its ways, and the lightning was hardly more instantaneous and overwhelming than his indignant retort. I knew him intimately, and I never knew a man more free from ill will towards all men or towards any man. And yet the violence of his language, in repelling any attack or reproach directed against the Church, its teaching, or its institutions, was beyond anything of the kind I have ever known in other men; and I more than once reproved him and endeavored to mitigate his strong feeling.

But I am anticipating. At the time of his ministry in Polk and the adjacent counties, I think he had not developed into so ardent a controversialist, but was mostly engaged in fighting the wickedness, ignorance, and indifference which he found all about him, with an occasional diversion on the subject of immersion and infant baptism.

It was in 1883 that he first attended a Diocesan

Convention in North Carolina. That convention met in St. Peter's Church, Charlotte, of which I was then rector, and it was there I first met him. The Sunday after adjournment, the bishop held an ordination in the church and asked that the offerings should be given towards the church building which Mr. Jones had begun at Tryon. The offering amounted to one hundred dollars, and Bishop Lyman asked me to carry it to Mr. Jones, instead of sending it; and said he hoped I would spend a day or two with him and acquaint myself with his work.

I shall never forget the day spent in riding in his company along the valleys and up and down the steep bridle-paths of Polk County, visiting his people and talking with them and with him. He was everywhere received with the most unstudied but unmistakable manifestations of friendly confidence and affection. Whether it was a company of men working the county road, or a mother and her little ones in a lonely log cabin on the mountain-side, or a father with his family of stalwart sons just in from the field to eat their midday meal—all equally welcomed him, and put aside for the moment their pressing employments for a word and a smile. And his word, first or last, had always a lesson or an exhortation or an earnest inquiry in the line of his great work; and it was always received and answered in a way to show that they were accustomed to it from him, and were not wholly unresponsive; or it may be that his word was a solemn and weighty reproof or warning or rebuke; and then he was always plain and emphatic, and not to be misunderstood. In fact, in one such case his reproof included such "damnatory clauses" that after leaving the house I ventured a gentle remonstrance, and was assured in reply that he understood what he was about, and that I did not. And then he proceeded to unfold the situation with such illustrations of my ignorance

and of his better knowledge, that I ventured upon no further remonstrances.

On this ride I saw for the first time the beautiful yellow azalea of our mountains, coming suddenly upon a specimen some ten or twelve feet high, in the full glow of its blazing yellow splendor, and for an instant thinking that I saw Moses' burning bush renewed.

All during the day, as we rode along, I noticed that every little while he would take from his pocket a dilapidated little book, open it at random, seemingly, read a few lines, and return it to his pocket. After a while, I ventured to ask him what it was he was reading. He handed it to me, saying that he valued it above every other possession, as it had been for many years carried and used by his father. I do not remember the title of the book, but Dr. DuBose, of Sewanee, remembers that when a student in the theological department Milnor Jones had a book of this kind, which he carried and used constantly, called "The Blood That Cleanses." My recollection is that it was a collection of Scripture texts, arranged topically, under appropriate headings, as Faith, Repentance, Love, Hope, and the like. It was very much worn, the corners all rounded off, so that it was almost of an oval form, and the binding at the back entirely gone. It was an hour or two after dark before we returned to Dr. Cureton's house in Tryon, where we were to spend the night. Yet, after it had for some time been too dark to distinguish a letter, I observed him take the little book from his pocket at intervals, as he had done all during the day, open it, and seem to read for a moment, and then put it up. This often came to my mind in after days. Though eminently intelligent and strong-minded, there was always something about him which I did not understand; and in his latter years he somehow lost all power of useful or continuous

mental exertion. Some thought this the result of the accident in his early manhood, which has been mentioned, and that injury may have had some permanent effect, becoming more marked as his age advanced. But it is to be remembered that there were several cases of mental weakness and disorder in his immediate family connection. Doubtless these things must be taken into consideration when we remember his extravagance of language and other unusual manifestations in his character and work. He could not be colorless or commonplace in word or in conduct.

It is difficult to estimate the extent of his work or the number of his appointments. His reports, printed in the Convention Journals, are meager and without details. In 1883, in his first report in the Diocese of North Carolina, he names nine places where he had "regular appointments," and the list omits any mention of Columbus, though he says that he had **leased the court-house** there and was carrying on a day-school in it, with two teachers. He reports: Baptisms—infant 112, adult 41, of whom several were over seventy years of age, and one more than a hundred. There had been 16 confirmations, 4 Sunday-schools, with 12 teachers and 100 children; a log church had been built at the "Cross Roads." His regular preaching stations were: Tryon, Mills' Spring, The Cross Roads, Huggins' School-House, Riverside, Green River Cove, The Ridge, Weston's Sawmill, and Brudgman's School-House. He had preached occasionally at other places "tedious to enumerate," including "The Block-House Distillery" and the "summit of Tryon Mountain." These names seem to indicate that he had already begun to overflow into Rutherford and Henderson. In 1884 he reports: Baptisms—infant 148, adult 52; confirmations 33. This year several names of places drop out and new ones appear. He seems to have

abandoned Tryon, having finished the church and made things ready for more regular ministrations, and we now find Revis's School-House, Lyda's, Bat Cave, Aikens, etc., with one church and one chapel.

In 1885 he adds "Whitesides, Seagles, etc., etc.," with baptists—infant 39, adult 18; confirmations 67; "entered the Church from the sects, 42." He mentioned that there is now a clergyman at Tryon.

His incessant labors, habitual hardships and discomforts, not to be understood except by one acquainted with the life in our mountains at that time, together with his own utter recklessness of all considerations of personal ease, comfort or welfare, had begun to tell very seriously upon his health, and it may be said that from this time he was never a really sound man again.\*

In 1886 he says that his "health is not yet restored." He reports: Baptisms—infant 24, adult 10; confirmations 27; "a log church for the colored people has been built near Tryon."

In 1887 he reports: "My health has been such that I have performed any duties with difficulty." Baptisms—infant 10, adult 5; confirmations 15.

In 1888 others have succeeded him in most of his former missions, and he adds new names—Blue House Church, Gilreath's, Thompson School-House. Baptisms—infant 39, adult 9; confirmations 22.

In 1889: Baptisms—infant 14, adult 10. "Log church erected at Arlege's, and church begun at Turner's."

In 1890 there is a new name—St. Paul's—probably a church of that name at one of the points formerly occupied. Baptisms—infant 24, adult 4; con-

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\* During this period a serious affection of the bladder, caused by cold and exposure, and the impossibility of securing medical attention when most needed, coupled with the unskillfulness of an inexperienced practitioner, who endeavored to treat him, produced physical results from which he never after recovered, and which occasioned at times great inconvenience and intense suffering.

firmations 14. Public services — on Sundays 125, other days 75.

His name disappears from the Diocesan Journals after 1890. Bishop Lyman, in his address to the Convention of 1892, says he had given him letters dimissory to Oregon.

Meager as these reports are, they indicate a life of extraordinary activity, devotion, and efficiency. It is safe to say that no clergyman of the Church has ever made such an impression upon the people of those counties, or ever brought such numbers of them into the Church. It is now nearly thirty years since he left that field, and his memory is still cherished among many of the old men and women who knew him. As Mr. Charles Pearson, of Tryon, one of the most intelligent and highly esteemed citizens of Polk County, said to me in 1894: "Mr. Jones changed the lives of a great many persons in Polk County."

In 1898, walking in the neighborhood of Flat Rock, in Henderson County, with the Rev. Robert M. W. Black, and speaking of the work of Milnor Jones in that section, we saw a country woman washing at a spring. I said to Mr. Black: "You may think I overestimate the impression made by Mr. Jones on the plain people of the country. I will mention his name to that woman, and let her reply, approve or discredit my account." Approaching the woman, we entered into conversation with her. Presently, I said to her: "Did you ever hear of an Episcopal minister in this country by the name of Milnor Jones?" She looked up from her work with a bright expression of interest, and replied: "Oh, yes, sir; I knew him well. He baptized all my brothers. Can you tell me where he is?"

I do not remember whether it was from Mr. Jones himself or from the Rev. William B. Barrow, that I received the following account of his first acquaint-



ance with the Seagle family in Henderson County, who became loyal Churchmen and his faithful and helpful friends. Mr. Philip C. Seagle, a brave Confederate soldier, who had lost a leg in the war, had removed to Henderson County from the country about the Catawba. He was of German descent and had been brought up a Lutheran, with a good Lutheran's reverence for the sacraments, and dislike of revival methods and emotional extravagance. In Henderson County he had found no Lutherans, and with his family had held aloof from the neighboring Baptists and Methodists. On this account, his neighbors considered the Seagles as little better than unbelievers, and Mr. Jones was told that they were a family of infidels, or "in-fiddles," as his rustic informant pronounced the word. He proceeded at once to encounter this stronghold of irreligion, and was much surprised to find in Mr. Seagle a man of strong character and of earnest religious convictions. He was warmly welcomed by all the family, and found a ready response to his appeals, and a soil prepared for his sowing. Mr. Seagle was glad of an opportunity of Christian fellowship and worship upon terms which appealed to his mind and conscience, and gave their due place and importance to the sacraments. The whole family came into the Church, and there sprang up an affectionate relationship between them which ended only with his death. There were six sons and two daughters in the Seagle family. Upon leaving them to go on to other parts of his field, Mr. Jones said to Mr. Seagle: "Here you have six fine boys. I cannot help feeling that you owe one of them to the Lord for the work of the ministry. I am going away now, but I will come back and visit you again by such a date. Now, you and the boys think this matter over, and talk it over among yourselves, and ask God's guidance, so that when I return you may tell me which of these boys

God wants for His work in the ministry.” In due course of time he came again, and asked the father and the boys if they had remembered what he had said to them, and if they were prepared to give him an answer. Mr. Seagle replied that he and the boys had talked it over and had looked for God’s guidance, and had come to a decision. “Here is Nathan,” he said. “He is the oldest. He has had more schooling than the others. He has a first-grade certificate as a teacher in the public schools. And Nathan says that he is willing to give himself to the ministry if he is thought to be worthy.” So Mr. Jones sent Nathan over to Asheville, to study under the Rev. Dr. Buel until he was prepared to enter the General Theological Seminary. The Rev. Nathan A. Seagle is now the rector of an important parish in New York City. Later, a younger brother, John, also entered the ministry. And with Nathan Seagle Mr. Jones sent another Henderson County boy to Dr. Buel—George V. Gilreath, who also went to the General Seminary, and was ordained to the ministry.

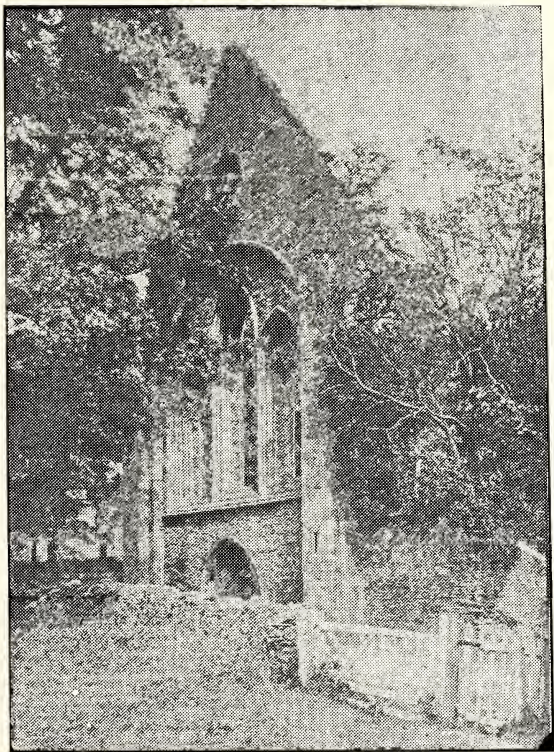
The late Dr. John D. McCullough, of Walhalla, S. C., Milnor Jones’s old rector at Glenn Springs, spending the summer at Saluda, near Tryon, and hearing of his work in the country among the poorest and most ignorant of the people, had a desire to observe his method of interesting them. He went, therefore, to a country school-house, where he heard Mr. Jones was to preach, and before the congregation began to assemble, took a seat in the most obscure corner. Soon after dusk, the house had pretty well filled up with people from the neighborhood, and Mr. Jones came in. He wore a long sack coat. From one pocket he took a candle, which he lighted and fixed upon the end of a projecting log in the wall; from another pocket he took out his Bible and began his simple service of reading and prayer before he preached. No man set a higher value upon

the Prayer Book than Milnor Jones, and in all my experience I have known no man who had more widely distributed Prayer Books among the people than he had. Indeed, I believe I have known no man who had distributed one-half so many as he had. But there was a reality about his purpose of getting at the hearts and consciences of his hearers which saved him from the folly of making the Prayer Book a hindrance where he knew it could not be a help.

It must have appeared, from what has so far been said, that, though a man of extraordinary effectiveness within his sphere, his sphere was distinctly a very limited one. In a few years he would for the time exhaust his physical strength by his unremitting labors, and in a somewhat similar way he would exhaust his spiritual and intellectual resources. "He came to the end of his rope," to use a common phrase. And he was not unconscious of this himself. He had baptized nearly six hundred persons, old and young, during his ministry in this section, and had presented nearly two hundred for confirmation. He had built several churches, and had laid wider foundations than his successors have yet been able to build upon; but he was much broken in health and had become afflicted with a painful and distressing physical infirmity. He went from North Carolina to Oregon in 1891, and I saw and heard nothing more of him for several years.

### CHAPTER III.

#### In North Carolina Again: Watauga, Mitchell, and Ashe Counties.



Ruins of Valle Crucis Abbey, Wales (West Front).

When upon the death of Bishop Lyman, December 13, 1893, I became Bishop of the Diocese, one of my first thoughts was to endeavor to restore the old Mission of Valle Crucis; to regain the site hallowed

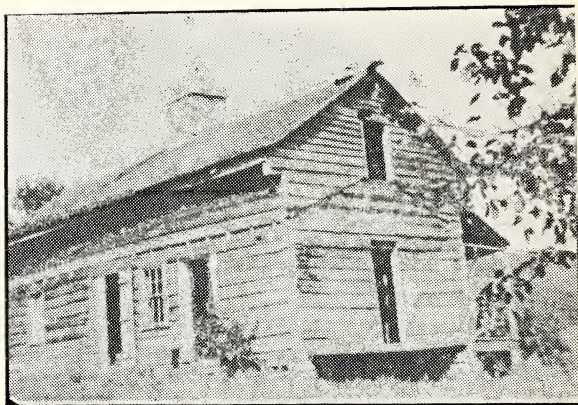
by so many pious and noble associations; and to revive along the Wataugu River the old interest in the work and worship of the Church. It seemed to me that Milnor Jones was the man who could do this. He was then in distant Oregon—I knew not exactly where. By January, 1894, I had learned his post-office address, and I at once wrote and asked if he would not come back to this diocese. I was much gratified by his reply. He wrote: “When I read in the papers that you had been elected Bishop, my heart turned back to North Carolina.” Unfortunately, however, he had, only the day before the receipt of my letter, accepted an offer made by Bishop Gailor, and had promised to go to Harriman, Tennessee. In August, 1894, having obtained Bishop Gailor’s generous consent, I wrote to him at Harri-man, saying that Bishop Gailor had no objection to his coming to me, if he desired to do so. His reply was, in substance, and so far as I can remember, in these words: “Where do you want me to go? What do you wish me to do? And what salary will you give? Not that the **amount** of the salary makes any difference; I only wish to know just what I have to go on.” I replied as explicitly: “I want you to go to Valle Crucis, on the Watauga River. I want you to revive the old Valle Crucis Mission, as your special work; and I give you for your field of operations Watauga, Mitchell, and Ashe Counties, to do what you can in them. I will give you six hundred dollars a year, payable monthly.” Within a couple of weeks he was on the Watauga, had fitted himself out with a horse, saddle, bridle, and saddle-bags, and had begun his campaign, leaving his wife and children to follow at their convenience. A little later he established them at Elk Park, on the northern border of Mitchell County, practically midway between the two extremes of his work, Beaver Creek and New River, in Ashe County, on the north, and



Bakersville, the county town of Mitchell County, on the south. His own headquarters he established at Valle Crucis, on the Watauga River, having a room for his few possessions at the house of Sheriff David Beard, but spending his time where his work called him.

Valle Crucis proper, the site of the old mission so named by Bishop Ives, is about a mile distant from the Watauga River, on Dutch Creek. The beautiful valley of this stream is at nearly the same point entered by two smaller valleys, at right angles to the course of Dutch Creek, Crab Orchard Creek coming in from the north, and Clark's Creek from the south, thus forming the cross valley of beautiful green meadows and cornfields, which doubtless suggested to Bishop Ives the name, **Valle Crucis**. The old Welsh Abbey of Valle Crucis, from which he took the name, has, however, no such topographical situation, so far as I could see when I visited it a few years ago. When Milnor Jones undertook to revive the old Valle Crucis Mission, only one or two of the old buildings remained, and they were owned and occupied for residence and farming purposes.





Old building of Bishop Ives's time.

Only one communicant of the church, so far as I remember, remained in that part of the county, James Thomas, who lived some four or five miles down the river, near St. John's Church. Over at Boone, the county town of Watauga, there was a small church, but the family of Dr. William B. Council were the only representatives of the church in the place. On the southeastern border of the county, Blowing Rock had recently become quite a village of summer visitors, and those who ministered to the necessities and convenience of the summer visitors. A church had been built there, and a small congregation had been formed, but that meant little or nothing for any church work or influence among the people of the country. Regular services were not maintained in any one of these three churches, and there had not been a resident minister of the Church in Watauga County since the death of the Rev. William West Skiles in 1862. Blowing Rock

and Boone may be left out of the account in considering Milnor Jones and his work. He had a few services at each place, but really devoted no time or attention to them. He had his own ideas of what he wanted to do, and with a man of his peculiar character it is best to let him "have his head."

He had now a field of work which exactly suited his peculiar qualities. From one end to the other of the three counties, in a northeasterly and southwesterly course, the distance is something like seventy or eighty miles, with only the ordinary mountain roads connecting his distant stations. He had not a single church or chapel for his services, St. John's Church on the Watauga, and St. Luke's at Boone, being both outside the scheme of work he had laid out for himself, although he had periodical services in both for the people of the neighborhood. His special work was to revive Valle Crucis as a center of church work and influence. He felt that he should concentrate on that point, and neither St. John's nor St. Luke's seemed to afford any favorable prospect of growth. He, therefore, preached from house to house, and appointed Sunday and week-day meetings at all places of public gathering, school-houses, mills, country stores, and at "free churches." He made friends of all who would receive him in a friendly spirit, and he and his big bay horse, John, soon became familiar acquaintances throughout the three counties. He had a wonderful talent for friendship, and for knowing everybody. He never seemed at all disposed to gossip. His common talk seldom strayed far or long from religious subjects, and as a rule, unless he had some definite purpose requiring a different course, he was most discreet and tactful in social intercourse. But among uneducated people, and in thinly settled sections, personal happenings and experiences, and family histories, form a large part of the day's talk. He

had a wonderful faculty for remembering what he heard, and for **knowing** everything about everybody; and he seemed to be able to lay the hand of his influence upon whole sections of the community, upon this and that family connection, and to attach them to him, and to the Church, with a loyalty which is most unusual. He could somehow stimulate and impress the popular imagination, and represent the Church to the popular mind in a way which, while often deeply offending those whom he did not convince, at the same time drew with ardent attachment the minds and hearts of many. I have never known any man who had such success as he had in making loyal and ardent Churchmen of uneducated persons wholly unfamiliar with our teaching or methods of worship. This was wonderfully illustrated by his first year's work in Watauga and Metchell Counties.

In April, 1895, he wrote that he desired to have a visitation from me to his Valle Crucis work, and also to Bakersville, as early in the summer as would be convenient for me, as he had a number of candidates for Confirmation in both missions. To the Convention of May, 1895, he reported: Baptisms—infant 19, adult 4. He reports two Confirmations, but they had been performed before he had entered the field. He reports services at “Valle Crucis, Boone, Blowing Rock, Dutch Creek, Clark's Creek, Grandfather Mountain, Banner's Elk, Elk Park, Yellow Mountain, Bakersville, Phillip's School-House, Dresden, Willow Grove, Sutherland, and other places.”

June 18th, I proceeded to Blowing Rock, where Mr. Jones met me. I think I can not better describe his work than by giving an account of my first visitation to his scattered missions. His own horse, with another which he had hired, were hitched to a strong buggy, and in it we made the trip from Blowing Rock. His baggage, including his surplice, was all

contained in a pair of saddle-bags. A suit-case and small handbag held all that I could take. We had service in the church at Blowing Rock, Wednesday, June 19th. The next day we drove over to Boone, and had service Thursday night in St. Luke's Church. These were merely preliminary skirmishes. The real campaign was yet to begin.



Bill Holler's house.

Friday morning, June 21st, we drove from Dr. Councill's, in Boone, to "Bill Holler's Mill," on Laurel Fork of Watauga River, three or four miles above Valle Crucis. This had been one of Mr.



Jones's regular stations, and here we found a large congregation awaiting us. Many of the people could not read well enough to take part in a Prayer Book service, and we had few books. We had a short service, with hymns, reading the Bible, the Creed, and prayers; then a sermon and Confirmation. The miller and his wife, several of their children, and a number of their neighbors, fourteen in all, including four married couples, kneeling on the ground—the service, of course, had to be out-of-doors—received the Laying on of Hands. After the service, the hospitable miller asked us all to dine with him, and a large number accepted his generous invitation. He was a poor man, with only his grist-mill and a little mountain farm, but he gave us bread and potatoes, and butter and milk, and then rhubarb pie sweetened with honey, and the whole seasoned with his fine, generous welcome.

At 4 o'clock in the afternoon we went down Laurel Fork to the Watauga, crossed the river, and climbed the mountain-side to the cabin of Harrison Mitchell, whose wife was unwell, and his mother eighty-three years of age, so that neither of them could get out. There I had a short service, preached them a short sermon, and confirmed the man and his wife, a grown son, and the aged grandmother, many of their neighbors forming the congregation.

Mr. Jones, more merciful to his Bishop than are some of his brethren, had left Saturday without an appointment, and kindly said that I might go fishing for small-mouth black bass in the Watauga—and I suppose I did so. He had himself no taste for idling.

June 23rd, the **Second Sunday after Trinity**, we had service in St. John's Church, on the Watauga River, four miles below Valle Crucis. I confirmed an old woman, preached, and administered the Holy Communion. At half-past four o'clock, in a ruinous old house on Dutch Creek, near Valle Crucis, I preached and confirmed three persons. Our vestry room was a circular space in a dense growth of beautiful rhododendron, upon which lingered a few of their splendid purple blossoms.

Monday, June 24th, **St. John Baptist's Day**, under the trees near the house of Andrew Jackson Townsend, on Clark's Creek, one or two miles above Valle Crucis, Mr. Jones baptized three children and a half-grown boy. I preached and confirmed seven persons, and made an extended address on Baptism and Confirmation.

June 25th, we drove on fifteen miles to Elk Park, and had service and preached at night in the Presbyterian Church.

June 26th, we drove from Elk Park to Bakersville, some thirty miles by the road we had to travel, and were entertained by Mr. Thomas A. Love, one of the two Churchmen whom Mr. Jones had found in Bakersville. At Mr. Love's were several large boxes which had been hauled over the mountains from Marion on the railroad. They had come from New York and were directed to the Rev. Milnor



Jack Hilton,  
the Bishop's fisherman friend.



Jones, at Mr. Love's, in Bakersville. Upon asking about them, Mr. Jones informed me that they were Bibles, Hymnals, and Prayer Books, mostly the last, which he had sent down for distribution among the people. "Why!" I exclaimed, "here are two or three times as many Prayer Books as you can give away." "No," said he; "I could give away many more, to people who will be glad to have them."

Thursday we spent with Mr. Love, and in seeing such people as came in to see us. Thursday night, in the court-house, Mr. Jones said Evening Prayer, and, with help of our numerous Prayer Books, we had a fairly good service.

I preached on Conversion (St. Mathew 13:14, 15) and confirmed the wife of our host, and two other persons. There were a number of other candidates, but we preferred to have them come the next night. And, never having witnessed the service before, they also preferred not to come forward at its first administration. Thursday, many persons came to Mr. Love's house to see us, mostly people from the country, and I was surprised to find how eager they were to receive the copies of the Prayer Book we gave them. Friday night we had Evening Prayer again in the court-house. I preached—without a text—on "The Church," and confirmed nine persons, some of whom were among the most prominent men in the town and vicinity. Saturday, we visited the county jail and talked with the prisoners. Many country people came to see us. In the evening Mr. Jones preached in the country, a mile or so from town.

June 30th, **the Third Sunday after Trinity**, in the court-house, Mr. Jones said the Litany. I preached and administered the Holy Communion. By this time our services had attracted such attention that many people came in from the country, and the court-house was packed, all the seats filled, and the

open spaces crowded with men standing, as is sometimes seen during the trial of a sensational capital case in court. At night it was the same. After preaching, I confirmed one person.

As I had an appointment for Tuesday, July 2nd, at a distant point, Mr. Jones and I left Bakersville early Monday morning. As we drove through the principal street we heard some one calling. Looking back, we saw the mayor of the town coming out into the street and signaling us to stop. He was a lawyer of prominence, one of the leading Republican politicians of that district, and father-in-law of one of the United States Senators from North Carolina. When he came up he said he had come out to beg that we would come back to Bakersville as soon as possible, because he was anxious to be confirmed. He said that he had attended the services the day before, and had been so much impressed that he had determined to become a member of the Church, and had been strongly moved to come forward the night before and ask me to confirm him then and there, but he did not know whether I would feel that I could do so, and he had therefore concluded to wait and to ask me to return at an early day.

I fear that Mr. Jones and I felt a little complaisant and self-satisfied as we drove out of Bakersville early on that first day of July. We had that morning baptized an adult, and had her and her husband as candidates, making three against my next visit. Our road lay just west of the summit of the Blue Ridge, first in Mitchell County and along the North Toe River, then into Yancey County, and across the beautiful South Toe and through the little town of Burnsville, and so into Buncombe. The road, though steep and rocky in places, was dry and on the whole good. Our horses, having stood in their stalls since the preceding Wednesday, were fresh and mettlesome. The day was fair, the sun bright, but not

burning. Among those high mountains the air was delightful even at midday in July. We greatly enjoyed our ride, and felt that we were indeed doing well. It was the old case of—

“Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows”; and we all unmindful that behind us at Bakersville something like “the whirlwind” was preparing for us, while a more tangible peril lay across our path in front.

We passed that night at a farm-house in Yancey County, and the next morning resumed our journey. Heavy clouds, which during the morning were gathering along the tops of the mountain, began to overspread the sky, and about noon we had quite a heavy fall of rain. Though it poured in torrents for a while, yet, after the manner of summer storms in the mountains, it was soon over, and the sun was again shining brightly, and the masses of broken clouds were rolling away and melting in the clear air. The landscape seemed only fresher and more beautiful for its bath. But as we drew near the little village of Democrat, in Buncombe County, we saw, by the condition of the roads, and by the quantity of water filling all depressions and pouring along all roadside drains, that there must have been a much heavier rainfall than we had experienced a few miles back; and as we passed through the village and so on to the crossing of the Big Ivy, a mountain stream flowing into the French Broad River not very far above the town of Marshall, which was our destination, that there I might take the train for the Hot Springs, we met several vehicles which had evidently just forded the stream, and which showed the mark of their crossing high upon their sides and wheels. So, as they had crossed, we felt no hesitation in attempting the ford ourselves. The stream was much out of its banks and running with a fierce and turbid current. But we drove in,

without a pause, having a good, strong buggy and a pair of horses quite above the average height and weight. Indeed, Mr. Jones's horse, familiarly known all over his circuit as "Old John," stood at least three or four hands above the ordinary animal of the country. And it was well we had so heavy, high, and staunch a team. When we struck the mid-bed of the stream, the water suddenly rose from the foot of the buggy up to the seats, and before we realized it we were sitting several inches deep in water, and the tremendous force of the swollen torrent, striking against the side of the buggy and catching upon the curtains of the top, which we had not lowered, threatened every moment to overturn the vehicle, in which case we should probably have been caught under the open top, and if so caught, would almost inevitably have been drowned. I at once called to Mr. Jones to turn around and drive back out of the stream. But he knew better. I used to say that he was afraid of nothing but high water. He had once or twice been in imminent danger of drowning, and he made no secret of this fear. But in this only instance of such danger which I ever witnessed he was admirably self-possessed. When I called out to him to turn back, "No," he said; "if I attempt to turn around in the tremendous torrent, the buggy will certainly be upset by the force of the water and the horses probably thrown down. We must go down the stream." With that he deliberately put the heads of the horses down-stream and began to drive down mid-stream, with the water coming over our knees and almost to our waists, as we sat. But this at once took the terrible strain off our team, and the water bore the buggy downward, but with no danger of overturning it. The weight and height of the horses enabled them to keep their footing, and the moment we were thus steadied and relieved of the imminent danger of being upset, Mr. Jones

turned their heads slightly towards the shore, not greatly altering our course and still keeping the force of the current behind us pressing us forward; and so in a very few moments, and within less than a hundred yards distance, we came gradually into shallower water, and drove out safe upon the further side. From the point where we emerged we could see some distance down the stream, and we observed that the banks were much wider and the channel therefore shallower. We also saw by the tracks of wheels and horses on both sides that it was at this point that those persons had crossed whom we had met just before we drove into the ford.

When the buggy made its first plunge into deep water and we found the water rising up towards the seat, Mr. Jones had called to me to look out for his saddle-bags, which were in the hinder part of the buggy. I turned at once and reached for them, but just as I reached, the current, sweeping into the back of the buggy, whirled them away before I could lay hands on them, and the last we ever saw of them they were going, bobbing and dancing, down the middle of the stream. Fortunately for me, my suit-case was firmly wedged under the seat of the buggy, and my smaller bag was in front, between our feet, so that they were not carried away, though their contents were thoroughly soaked with water. But we were thankful to have escaped so well; and Milnor Jones always claimed for his horse, John, the whole credit of our safety. It was John's bulk and height, he always asserted, which kept the other horse steady. For my part, I felt sure that by the goodness of God we owed our escape to his own coolness, courage, and sound judgment. It took a cool head and a brave heart to turn the heads of his team down the middle of that fierce torrent. It was *in medio tutissimus*, in a new sense.

About an hour after this adventure, he drove me into the little town of Marshall, where I took the train for my next appointment, and he, minus his saddle-bags containing his scanty supplies and also containing his **one** surplice, turned back upon his long and solitary drive to join his family for a day or so at their home in Elk Park, and then to resume his work along the Watauga and in our new enterprise at Bakersville.



## CHAPTER IV.

### **Bakersville.**

In the meanwhile trouble was brewing in Bakersville. Bakersville and Mitchell County had at that period the reputation of being among the most lawless and violent sections of the Southern mountains. Though there were many homicides in the county, it was all but impossible to bring a murderer, or other greatly criminal person, to justice. I was told by a very intelligent citizen of the place that for a number of years the only execution for crime which had taken place in the county had been a **lynching**. I do not know whether that was literally true, but it very fairly expressed the state of the case.

Among the ignorant people of the mountains, as elsewhere, religious controversies are carried on with great violence and abusiveness of language. In Bakersville at this time there were three religious denominations with organizations and church buildings. These were the Baptists, the Southern Methodists, and the Northern Methodists; so that their religious differences were aggravated by a strong infusion of political prejudice and passion. Just before our visit a bitter discussion between two of these local churches had been in progress. We saw in the local paper some of the contributions to this controversy. But the services which we had held in the court-house seemed to be acceptable by both sides as a warning that they must close up their ranks and combine their forces against a common enemy.

In his preaching Mr. Jones always asserted the Apostolic character of the Church, and the necessity of an Apostolic ministry and a valid Commission to the proper Constitution of the Church, and the certi-

fication of the Sacraments. And he did not confine himself to abstractions, but spoke very forcibly, and probably with a power and a felicity of illustration which bettered the mountain preachers' best rhetoric, on the defects in the teaching, institutions, and ministerial authority, of the Baptist and Methodist organizations. He had so distinctly and uncompromisingly set forth the superior claims and advantages of the Church, and the importance to his hearers of coming out of their existing denominations, and into the true fold, that he was not only prohibited from using any of the local church buildings, but had even been refused permission to preach in the local school-house. We therefore had our services in the court-house. At these services I had done all the preaching myself; and while I set forth very plainly and strongly the teaching of the Church **affirmatively** and positively, I avoided, for the most part, any statement as to the deficiencies of other Christian organizations. I have always felt that, if we can get men to accept positive truth and duty, the negative side will be amply attended to. But Sunday night, at our last service, Mr. Jones made an address in his peculiar vein, and pretty strongly set out his opinion of the Baptist and the Methodist churches, though with no more offensiveness of language essentially than is common in their own controversial preaching in that section of the country. They had not really troubled themselves about Mr. Jones and his preaching before this time. They resented his attacks on their systems and their doctrines, but they did not think him of much importance. But our meetings in the court-house, the Confirmation of several of the prominent men of the town, with the attitude of others, moved their fears.

The day we left Bakersville—the first Monday in July—was the day for the monthly meeting of the County Commissioners. Prominent Methodists and

Baptists went before the board and procured the passage of an order that the court-house should not be used for religious services. The local newspaper, in chronicling the fact, stated that the reason they gave for this action was that "the Episcopalians had been preaching uncomfortable doctrine." Subsequently, a communication, signed by a number of the most prominent citizens—Baptists and Methodists—denied this, and said that the order was made merely on account of the condition of the court-house, which was unsafe for large audiences.

Having thus secured themselves against Mr. Jones's preaching, as they supposed, they proceeded to hold a joint meeting of Baptists and Methodists, both Northern and Southern, in which the Northern Methodist resident preacher was the speaker, he being the ablest and best educated of the local ministers. The sermon was an elaborate and vigorous attack on the Church, all along the line of its history, doctrines, and worship; and it stirred up much enthusiasm on its own side, and was considered an effective reply to what had been advanced by the Bishop and his Deacon. In fact, the dominant factions felt that they had effectually silenced their opponents, having shut them out of all places where they could preach, and also having, in their judgment, fully refuted their arguments.

All this time Milnor Jones, thirty or forty miles across the mountains, was in ignorance of the course of events in Bakersville. Having an appointment there for Sunday, July 21st, he took the long and fatiguing horseback ride from Valle Crucis, by way of Elk Park, to Bakersville, not much short of fifty miles, although he had been quite sick for a week or so, and was still far from well. He reached Bakersville Friday night. Here he learned of the action of the county commissioners in closing the court-house against him, and also of the tremendous rally of the

Baptists and both sects of Methodists in a solidarity of opposition, and of the great sermon preached against the Church. Indeed, such a heat of opposition had been aroused among the great majority of the inhabitants of the little town, even among the really irreligious and careless, who naturally sided with the majority, that our small beginning of a flock found themselves much cast down and discouraged. They assured Mr. Jones that it was useless to attempt to preach, under the circumstances, and that they had better "lie low" until the excitement of public feeling had subsided. And then, after all, they said, he could not preach, because it was impossible to find any place, now that they were shut out of the court-house. Milnor Jones had not been able to "go slow" in South Carolina, and he did not know how to "lie low" in Bakersville. He was indignant at the suggestion that he could not preach, because he had been shut out of the churches, school-houses, and court-house. He felt that his acceptance of the situation, in such a way as that, would in this community be universally regarded as a virtual surrender and confession of failure. To his friends, who stated that he could not preach, because he had no place for service, he replied indignantly that he would show them whether he could preach or not. Thereupon, on Saturday morning, taking counsel of no one, he went to the local printing office and had struck off at once a hundred or two hand-bills, with a notice that the Rev. Milnor Jones would preach next day, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, in front of the court-house in Bakersville, and inviting all persons to attend at that time and place. These hand-bills he himself distributed in the town, and also to many persons from the country, who on Saturdays resort in large numbers to the county-seat.

We may be sure that he did not lack a congregation when the appointed hour had come. Friends

and enemies were alike attracted by the novelty of the situation, and by their interest in, or dislike of, the preacher. All knew that whatever he might say, there was no danger of his being uninteresting or tedious. And he proceeded to preach a sermon which was long remembered in Bakersville, with admiration and pride by his friends, but with sentiments of bitter resentment by his unfriends. It should be remembered that, whatever his early associations and training, he had deliberately made himself one with the plain people of the mountains, and had faithfully endeavored to enter into their ways and modes of thought and expression. The result was, that, with his natural force of intellect, and with his early advantages of training and education, he easily and perhaps unconsciously improved upon his model. He did not endeavor to be like the more or less cultivated preacher of the mountain town, where some of the refinements and amenities of social intercourse were known and cultivated. He was the preacher from the mountains, and he spoke especially for the poorer and plainer people. He had assimilated himself to the type, and he made no attempt to readjust himself to the higher average taste or sentiment of a town congregation.

He took for the subject of his sermon before the court-house in Bakersville, by the side of the Main Street of the town, the vision of the "Opening of the Seals," in the sixth chapter of the Book of the Revelation. He gave the interpretation of the vision which he had read, in the notes in Bishop Wordsworth's Greek Testament, on this chapter. The Rider on the White Horse was Christ, going forth conquering and to conquer. He on the Red Horse, to whom was given the great sword, represented the effort of the Evil One to destroy Christ's Church by the bloody sword of the heathen persecutors, from Nero to Diocletian. The Rider on the

Black Horse, having the pair of balances in his hand, represented the cunning devices of the Evil One, after the failure of the persecutors, in raising up heresies within the Church, and specially the Arian heresy; striving to measure and weigh and determine divine truth by the balances and measures of human reason. The Rider on the Pale Horse, with whom was Death, and Hell following after, called for more detailed treatment. He said the word "pale" did not quite express the meaning of the word used by St. John. It did not mean "pale" in our usual understanding of the word. It meant, rather, a bright and fair-seeming mingling of colors, attractive to the eye, but variable and evanescent; perhaps we might say a pied or party-colored horse, or a "calico horse," in our country phrase. This he interpreted as representing the efforts of the Evil One in these later ages to destroy God's Church by sects and schisms, divisions and opposing denominations, which many times are pleasing and attractive to the worldly mind, and make a fair and deceitful show of being good, and for the advantage of Christianity; but with them is Death to the real life and power of the Church, and Hell follows after.

Up to this point the sermon was a lucid and striking exposition of the Scripture passage, illustrated and applied with a simple force and eloquence, all the more effective, with its freight of real knowledge and thought, for the homely and rugged manner of the sepaquer. But he had now come to the pregnant passage of his exposition, and the objective point of his discourse. In his own mind he had gotten his Methodist and Baptist friends where he wanted them; he had identified the movement in Christendom which had produced them, as part of the effort of the Evil One to destroy the true nature and power of the Church; and we need not doubt that he made the most of it. If he had stopped even here, his best



results would have been attained in the minds of his own adherents, and perhaps his opponents might have felt that he had not exceeded the limits of controversy which may be permitted even before their town congregation. Unfortunately, he could not stop here. Up to this time he had not, I believe, been personally assailed with anything more than the ordinary weapons of sectarian controversy. He had no personal grievance, nor had I found evidence of any personal resentment in him towards any one in this place, or, indeed, in any place. He was astonishingly free from resentment, even when injuriously assailed. But the Methodists and Baptists had united to prevent the services of the Church in the town, and had been countenanced by those who were not even Methodists or Baptists, but men indifferent to Christian truth and duty. And there they were, sitting before him, with possibly a smile of satisfied triumph on their faces, because they had thus driven the Church into the street. He remembered, too, their joint meeting, their **pooling** of denominational interests, and the combination of all resources against the Church; and he had heard of the sermon in which the Church had, **as he considered**, been willfully misrepresented and abused.

Bakersville had been by no means a model community, and those most forward in opposing the Church were in some cases hardly entitled to set themselves up as regulators of Christian truth and practice. I have spoken of Milnor Jones's wonderful faculty of knowing everything about everybody in the communities in which he preached. In an extended peroration, to his sermon in front of the court-house, he drew one after another delineations of personal character, without names, but amazingly true to the lives of some of his audience, and terribly true to the conscience of each man aimed at; and he held them up to just scorn, as men not humbly and

with self-condemnation seeking pardon for the past, and help to be better in the future, but setting themselves up, in a vain, confident pretence of goodness, to oppose the Church of God. The whole assembly sat, half-dumb, with amazement at the audacity of this attack, or half-mad with anger at the pain of the blows, which was all the more excruciating because they could not be parried or returned. I was told by one present that some of the persons alluded to literally trembled and paled before the speaker; and in such a community, noted as it was for fierce and turbulent elements in the population, there was a prevalent feeling that the preacher stood in great danger of personal violence.

The outline of the expository part of the sermon I learned both from Mr. Jones himself and also from several of his most intelligent auditors. As to what followed the exposition, I had the substance of it from the preacher himself, and also a very extended account of its effect upon the audience from perhaps the ablest and most prominent man in the town, the then mayor. In speaking of it, he expressed the highest admiration for its ability and eloquence, but said it was in the last degree a perilous position into which the speaker had put himself, and that he had at the time the liveliest apprehension that he would be treated with personal violence. "I have seen this town in terrible moments of popular excitement and anger, but I thought I had never seen it nearer to an outbreak than after that sermon. I have heard great speeches," he continued, "from some of the greatest orators in the country. I have heard Conklin, of New York, and James G. Blaine and others, but I never heard a more powerful and eloquent speech than that of Mr. Jones in front of the courthouse."

The excitement had by no means subsided the next morning, and Mr. Jones's friends were most

uncomfortable on his account. He would by no means keep himself in the background, but, like St. Paul at Athens, his spirit was stirred within him, and he was in all public places, discussing and disputing with all that met with him, and giving them plainly to understand that, in his judgment, all their opposition to the Church proceeded from ignorance and prejudice. The local school teacher was much outraged at such a suggestion. He gave a beautiful illustration of the **argumentum ad hominem** reversed, and felt that he had abundantly answered Mr. Jones, and refuted his statement, by his naive question, "Am I ignorant?"

The next day Mr. Jones had to leave Bakersville and return to his duties in Watauga County.

I had promised to return to Bakersville at my earliest opportunity. I therefore arranged my visitations so as to be back in that section a little before the middle of August. The thirteenth of that month I reached Marion from the west, and found Mr. Jones awaiting me. Late in the afternoon as it was, we drove six miles on the road to Bakersville, and spent the night with a farmer by the roadside. I had heard some rumors of the exciting scenes which had occurred at Bakersville since my first visit, and Mr. Jones now gave me an account of the situation. His sermon in the street had made the action of the County Commissioners widely known. A number of the leading citizens of the place, smarting under the remembrance of that sermon, addressed a long communication to the News and Observer, Raleigh, accusing Mr. Jones of the greatest indecency and violence in his whole manner of speaking and preaching, and at great length holding him up to reprobation and contempt. He had, they said, asserted that the "Baptist and Methodist churches were only debating societies and social clubs"; "that their faith

was not sufficiently efficacious to save a soul; and if one of them should be saved at all it would be by virtue of what little Episcopal doctrine he had in his church," etc., etc., with examples of the most offensive and abusive language, which they asserted that he had used; and saying that he had "preached sermons in fits of anger and rages of passion," and so on. This communication had appended to it the names of a dozen or more persons, some of them prominent citizens of Bakersville. Immediately below this, in the paper, was a card, signed by Mr. Thomas A. Love, a member of our Bakersville congregation, and a prominent lawyer of that section, saying of the above mentioned communication that "the article is both false and malicious." So greatly in controversies will men differ. Before seeing the article, Mr. Jones had heard of it, and of its allegations that he had said that a Baptist or a Methodist could not be saved, except by believing "Episcopal doctrine." He thereupon sent a communication to the same paper, denying the allegation, but adding: "I did not say that. But I did say that if a Methodist or Baptist, or a member of any other modern denomination, is saved, it will not be by virtue of any of the peculiar doctrines of their own, for which they came out of the Church, but by reason of the original faith which the Church had before they left it, and which it as still. This I said, and this I am prepared to maintain on any stump in the United States or Canada!" This was the substance of Mr. Jones's card. I have mislaid the newspaper clipping containing his exact words.

Late in the afternoon of Wednesday, August 14th, we reached Bakersville, and I went at once to see my friend, the mayor, who had been so anxious that I should return, that he might be confirmed. He gave me a vivid account of the events and of the sermon of which I have been speaking. He was a

good man, I believe, and a man of some ability, prominent as a lawyer, and a leading Republican politician of his district, and had been their candidate for the Superior Court bench, if I mistake not. But he was a very timid man, and I found him in a state of much alarm, thinking himself in great danger, on account of his declared purpose of being confirmed. He assured me that his convictions and his purpose had undergone no change; that he would meet me in Asheville to be confirmed, or he would come down to Raleigh; but he said he could not be confirmed in the public street in Bakersville: he did not know what might happen to him before morning if he should do this. I urged on him his duty, as a Christian and as a man, to act in accordance with his conscience and his reason, and that he should put under his feet the base fears which made him quail before the face of men, so much his inferiors in intelligence and character. I assured him that if he would show them how little he feared or regarded them, they would not venture to menace or to harm him. "Oh, Bishop," he said, "you do not know them. Why, I have had a man sleeping in my barn for the last three weeks, for fear it would be set on fire." I do not myself believe that there was any such danger as he apprehended, or that his neighbors or any one intended any such injury to him. He was notoriously a timid man, but I think his state of mind does illustrate to some extent the situation at the time. I may add that, a year or two afterwards, this man did appear in Raleigh, where I happened to be at a Sunday night service, but with no purpose of holding a confirmation, and came up and asked me to confirm him, and I did so during the service.

Notice had been given that I would preach and administer confirmation by the Main Street in front of the court-house at half-past ten o'clock Thursday



morning, August 15th. Mr. Jones had lost his surplice when his saddle-bags had been carried down Big Ivy Creek, July 2d, and had not as yet been able to procure another; so, as we were in the law office of our friend, Mr. Love, preparing for the service, I said to Mr. Jones: "As you have no surplice, I think I will not wear my vestments; and being in the public street, perhaps it will be more seemly." "Yes," said Mr. Jones, "I think that will perhaps be best." Thereupon, Mr. Love, who does not like anything which looks like **flinching**, said, but with becoming modesty: "Bishop, you and Mr. Jones are much better judges of what is proper on this occasion than I am. At the same time, I cannot help saying that, if a thing is worth doing at all, **it is worth doing right.**" "And that is entirely true," I responded; "I will put on everything I have, and I wish I had more to put on for this service." So I went down in rochet, stole and chimere, and read a chapter from the Bible, said the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and Collects, sang a hymn, preached half an hour or more, and confirmed a man (brother of my friend, the mayor), kneeling on the ground by the side of the street. Many people were gathered around, many others in the doors and windows of the court-house, and of the houses along the street, looking on. When I began to preach I doubted whether my voice could reach them all. After I had been speaking five minutes, I felt as if I could make them hear me a mile away. I never spoke with more ease, freedom, and enjoyment, or with a greater sense of the high privilege of being a servant and ambassador of my Lord.

In Mr. Love's house, after the service, I baptized a young woman and confirmed her and another candidate.

In the afternoon I had to return towards Marion on my way to other fields of duty.



## CHAPTER V.

### Valle Crucis Mission.

Before returning to his work on the Watauga, Mr. Jones had to drive me to Marion, that I might take the train for my next appointment. The distance is not much under forty miles, as I remember; so we drove only part of the way that afternoon, and spent the night in a house by the roadside. The next day we crossed the Blue Ridge by Holyfield Gap, called also Abernathy's Gap, the pass used by the Watauga men in 1780 when they marched to meet and destroy Ferguson and his Tories at King's Mountain. Marion was the most accessible station on the railroad from Bakersville, and Mr. Jones had sometimes to use this route, though Marion was not in his field.

In recalling my experiences in administering the Diocese, few things seem to me to have been more delightful than my long drives through the mountains for days together, and sometimes for ten days or two weeks, with Milnor Jones. I believe we always had the same outfit of buggy and horses, which had served us so well in crossing Big Ivy. Mr. Jones was one of the best and most careful drivers—for **his team**—whom I have ever known. He had no special regard for his own comfort; he cared very little for the comfort of his companion, and not a great deal for the vehicle. But of the welfare and comfort of his horses he was never for a moment forgetful.

In fixing upon a stopping-place for the night, solicitude for his team was his ruling motive. He had a great dislike for tavern-keepers and ostlers. He looked out for some plain and substantial farm house, where was a good barn and big haystacks. Any accommodation or food, however plain or coarse, was quite good enough for him, so he might

be sure of a good feed of oats or corn and unlimited hay for his horses at night, and a light feed for them the next morning. He always attended to their feeding, watering, and grooming himself. With coat off, and brush and curry-comb in hand, after the longest and hardest day's drive, he would give half an hour, or an hour if need were, with honest pride and enjoyment, to cleaning and rubbing down back, sides, and legs of his good horse John and of John's partner in labor, before leading them to their stalls and their supper. At crack of day he would be up, giving them their light feed of corn and hay; and he always looked carefully to the adjustment of the harness, and trusted nothing of all this to other hands or eyes. Bright and early we would have our breakfast, and be off upon our day's drive of thirty or forty miles, over mountain roads presenting in parts abundant illustrations of everything which a road ought not to be. We seldom experienced bad weather. June and July are delightful months in the high mountain counties of North Carolina; and nowhere in this part of the world are more extensive and charming prospects. A long day's drive gave great variety of beautiful scenery, and much leisure for its enjoyment. He always drove very slowly the first part of the day, and carefully noted the condition and spirits of his horses. Three or four miles an hour was as much as he cared to get out of them before the noon rest and bait. But when they had enjoyed an hour's rest at midday, with a moderate bait of oats or corn, and after we had had our fried bacon, corn-bread and buttermilk at some farm house, the pace would mend a bit, and, with an hour's warming to their work, he would begin to give them their heads and put them to their best gait; and from that time until night we would go at their very best speed, wherever the road permitted. "You can't hurt them now. They enjoy this as much as

we do," he would say. And at the day's end our horses would be fresh and in fine spirits.

When traveling alone he always went horseback. On one such journey from Marion to Bakersville he had as his companion on the road a prominent young lawyer of Marion, whom he had known as a boy in Rutherfordton. He had made an appointment with him to take the trip together, that he might have an opportunity for a serious conference with him on religious duty and the claims of the Church. After some ordinary conversation, with kindly inquiries after old acquaintances, he began to draw out his young friend upon the subject of his religious duty and his spiritual state. The young man, having been brought up a Baptist, had not been baptized in infancy, and had made no religious profession. He had talked with Mr. Jones before, and he now became so much impressed by Mr. Jones's conversation, and was so much moved by his instructive and enlightening setting forth of Christian truth and duty, that it was very soon another case of Philip the Deacon and the Treasurer of Queen Candace. As they journeyed they came to water, the beautiful stream and the clear waters of Armstrong's Creek. "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" "If thou believe with all thine heart, thou mayest"—is in effect the simple record of both cases. They went down to the waters of the creek, and there the Deacon baptized his convert—and by immersion. That young man has since become prominent in the public affairs of the State, one of its distinguished lawyers and politicians, and remains a zealous Churchman.\*

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\*MODE OF BAPTISM.—Milnor Jones frequently baptized his converts by immersion, as the Church allows this, and as the Baptist influence under which they had grown up made them desire it. But he did not himself believe that it was the apostolic mode or the scriptural mode, and he published some controversial tracts on the subject. He told me that when his candidates insisted on being immersed he took them into the water, and at the words, "In the Name of the Father," he poured water upon the head; at the words, "And of the Son," he sprinkled

Another eminent lawyer, who had been brought up a Presbyterian, but who was not at all a religious man, spoke to me once of having met the Rev. Milnor Jones on the train, where they occupied a seat together, and had had some conversation. He had been much impressed with the man, but, he said, "He talked too much about religion." He had not liked such "uncomfortable doctrine" as he probably heard; but it was quite apparent that it was that very thing which had so deeply impressed him. He did not like it, yet his conscience told him that the minister was doing his duty, and he respected and admired him for it.

As interesting as had been our experiences at Bakersville, I had to remind Mr. Jones that his chief work must be the revival of the old Mission at Valle Crucis. I wished him to subordinate other work to that, and to keep that ever before his mind as his chief aim and purpose. And, indeed, he had the same sentiment himself, and greatly desired to accomplish that design. The idea of such a work appealed to him, and he felt a good deal of enthusiasm for the cause. Unfortunately, however, he was constitutionally unable to pursue one definite course, but by his strong sympathies, easily appealed to, and readily diverted to the claims of the immediate opportunity in other directions, he was prevented from concentrating his energies persistently and continuously to carry through to the end one great work. I recognized this when I gave him the three counties. I knew he must have a wide range and variety of pasture to keep up his spirits and to supply abundant stimulus to his zeal. But I believed it would be possible to get him to make such a beginning in that long deserted field as might

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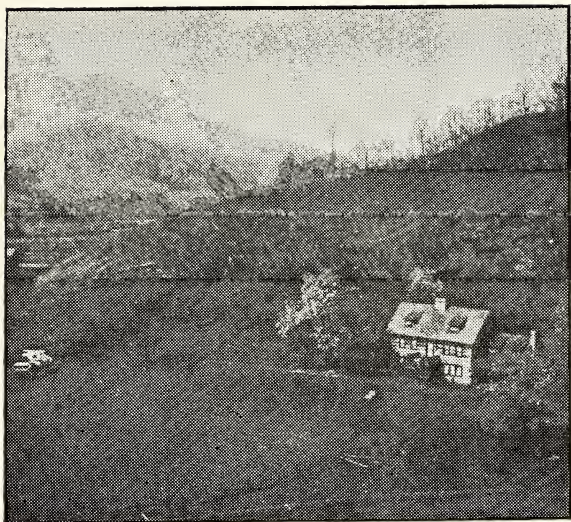
water upon them; and at the words, "And of the Holy Ghost," he immersed the whole body *once*. As the candidate got what he wanted, the immersion, he did not object to Mr. Jones's use of the preceding pouring and sprinkling.

enable others to enter in and build upon his foundations.

By the autumn and winter of 1895 I thought that a sufficient beginning had been made, and interest created, among the people along the Watauga River, in the vicinity of Valle Crucis, to warrant me in attempting to prepare to give some permanence to the work. It was now necessary to determine just what should be the scope and design of the work, and how much it would be proper to attempt at first. A short passage from my address to the Convention of the Missionary District of Asheville assembled at Morganton, September 23, 1896, will sufficiently set forth the purpose then entertained:

“Our most extensive missionary enterprise is the Valle Crucis Mission, embracing in its scope the counties of Watauga, Mitchell, and Ashe. This is practically the same ground covered by the old missionaries of Valle Crucis in Bishop Ives’s time. The work was revived just two years ago, when in September, 1894, I sent the Rev. Milnor Jones to Valle





Site of Easter Chapel, an old Valle Crucis Mission House of the Rev. Henry H. Prout.

Crucis, directing him to make his headquarters at the old Mission, but to include within the scope of his endeavors the three counties above mentioned.

"I should perhaps state in this place that, though I located my mission at the same place, and call it by the old name, it has never been my purpose to renew the scheme of work proposed by Bishop Ives. He had in mind a boarding school for boys, drawing patronage from all parts of the State, a diocesan training school for the clergy, and perhaps other objects of general interest and value to the whole Diocese. My scheme is confined to such things as have a direct bearing upon the work of evangelizing the people of these counties. I should like to make Valle Crucis an associate mission, from which

preachers and teachers should go out and keep up the work of evangelizing, instructing, and educating wherever an opening might be found or made."

This being the purpose in mind, we began to look about for means to erect a house for a center and home of the work. The property of the old "**Valle Crucis Abbey**," as Bishop Ives loved to call it, had been acquired, after the work was given up, by Mr. Henry Taylor, and at his death had passed to his children. At this time it was mostly owned by Mr. Charles D. Taylor, who was a Methodist, but who kindly promised that we might count on having part of the old tract for our building, when we should be in a position to proceed with the construction.

It is not my purpose to go into the details of this work, except so far as it is related to the services of the Rev. Milnor Jones. I had made some attempts to raise funds, and had a small sum on hand. Mr. Jones was eager to make an appeal for so much as might enable us to put up a building at Valle Crucis, and to establish mission schools there, and also at Bakersville, the southern limit of his work, and at Beaver Creek, his northernmost station in Ashe County. I therefore gave him permission to make the attempt, and furnished him with commendatory letters and with money for his expenses. Early in November, 1895, he began his campaign for funds. For several months he labored at that most ungrateful of tasks with the zeal and pertinacity which characterized all his endeavors. In his way he made almost as much of a sensation, when he came into contact with clergymen and laymen in our large cities, as among our country people in the mountains. Many curious stories were for some years floating about in New York at the Church Missions House, and in other places, about his oddities and his persistence and ingenuity in presenting the claims of Valle Crucis.

He was not unsuccessful. He raised a good sum of money, and during the year 1896 we were able to establish mission schools at Valle Crucis and at Beaver Creek, of which latter enterprise more shall be told after a while.

In the meantime he pressed on the work at Valle Crucis. Up and down the Watauga River, up Clark's Creek, along Laurel Fork by Bill Holler's mill, down by St. John's Church, Milnor Jones and his horse John were passing and repassing, and the countryside began to have its stories of his rude wit and rough pleasantries in his controversies with his many opponents. His first antagonists were the Baptists and a mountain sect called "Adventists." The more intelligent people about Valle Crucis were chiefly Methodists, and they rather enjoyed these stories. He was very attentive to the welfare of his good horse, and always fed him himself and attended carefully to his grooming. One good Methodist lady being asked where Mr. Jones was, replied that the last she had heard of him "He was currying down John, **and the Baptists.**" Unfortunately, he did not confine himself to one or two sets of opponents, but soon had them all equally irritated and antagonistic. But his friends were all the more loyal and zealous in their support of him; and both friends and enemies found many elements of kindness and good-fellowship in him. With the poorest people he was always gentle and friendly, and many of this class still cherish a warm affection for his memory. The only photograph of him which I have been able to obtain I had copied from one which some years after his departure he had sent to one of the oldest, poorest, and most illiterate of his Valle Crucis flock. It was with such that he loved best to stop and exchange the kindly offices of friendship. With the very poor he often stopped for the night in traveling about, and shared their coarse food and slept upon their hard beds. He said he could not

expect the very poor to believe that he really cared for them if they found that he always preferred to stay with others. And they felt the reality of the good will expressed in this habitual acceptance of their hospitality, and were proud of it. One of the things they loved to tell of him—and, I have no doubt, still love to tell—was how he would stop and eat their poor food and sleep hard and cold in their poor houses.



Jackson Townsend and his wife.

And among these poorer people he found some traces of the old Valle Crucis Mission and its work. Old Mrs. Townsend, of Clark's Creek, declared that she "had always been Episcopal." She said she had been baptized by Bishop Ives, and that she had had all her children baptized in the Church. After Mr. Skiles's death, when there was no clergyman of the Church in the county, she said she would keep the baby waiting until some clergyman would come around. And her daughter, Timothy Townsend's wife, shared her loyal attachments. "Timothy war Lutheran," she said, "but I pulled and I pulled, and

now he is Episcopal." She was truly a fruitful vine upon the walls of Timothy's humble mountain cabin, and when she had her sixteenth baby baptized she was indeed happy, and in telling of it she said, "I was so glad for the baby."

But the work of the old Valle Crucis Mission had left more important and more widespread results than the faint memories of a few old and obscure mountaineers. The whole population of that section of Watauga County retained an impression of that noble effort. A very intelligent observer and missionary, the Rev. Samuel F. Adam, who followed Mr. Jones in the immediate care of this work, and who spent a year or two in traveling about, mostly on foot, all through our missionary field in the three counties under consideration, was much impressed with the superior intelligence and general social development of the native population along the Watauga River, as compared with other parts of that country and the adjoining counties of Ashe and Mitchell. And the result of his observation and careful investigation and inquiry satisfied him that this superiority was directly and distinctly traceable to the work of old Valle Crucis School and missionaries. Most of the men who were well advanced in middle age, or a little beyond, had come under those influences; many of them had been pupils in the school. My own limited observation produced the same impression upon my mind. One of the most intelligent and influential men in that neighborhood said to me that all the education he had ever received had been in the old Valle Crucis School, and its influences was still to be observed in the general intellectual and social life of the community.

That those enlightening and elevating influences might be renewed, increased, and extended, was my earnest desire and hope. With this view, a mission school was started at Valle Crucis in 1896, and as soon as I could see any reasonable prospect of rais-

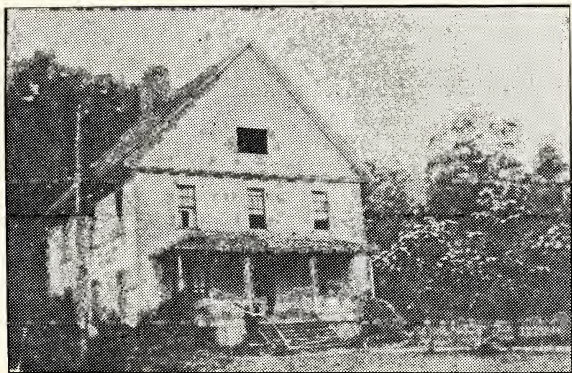


ing money for a building, I set about establishing a permanent home. Mr. Charles D. Taylor conveyed to me for this purpose, or rather to the proper trustees, a tract of three acres, part of the old Mission property, and, with the money raised by Mr. Jones, the building was erected during the years 1896 and 1897. Where Crab Orchard Creek comes down from its mountain glen, it opens into a beautiful cove of one or two acres, just before it descends to the broader valley forming the northern arm of the cross which gave the name Valle Crucis. This cove opens to the south, with a fairly level surface, Crab Orchard Creek running close under the slope of the mountain-side forming its eastern boundary. Near the steep bank on the western side of the cove, under a clump of rhododendron and kalmia, a cold spring of pure water bursts from the hillside. In this sheltered spot, backed by the forest-clad mountain, and closed in on two sides by projecting spurs, was placed the Mission House. It is a modest, unpretentious structure, with a hall running through the middle, and two rooms on each side of the hall, and a like arrangement in the second story. It was built of wood, and cost, to the best of my memory, twelve hundred dollars. It very fairly expressed the plain and practical character of the scheme of work then entertained. It was intended as a home for a teacher and the missionary, and perhaps a few pupils who might assist in the domestic duties of the household while enjoying the benefit of the school. In advance of this building, and near the public road passing along the front of the cove, the building, to include both chapel and school-room, was to stand, but this was not erected until after Mr. Jones had left the work.

The completion of the Mission House practically coincides with the termination of Mr. Jones's connection with Valle Crucis. He continued in the same field, but he was no longer specially concerned with

this part of the work. About this time we secured the services of the Rev. Samuel F. Adam, and the special charge of Valle Crucis was committed to him. Mr. Jones continued his general round of services, and gave special attention to an interesting work which he had built up in Ashe County, some five or six miles from the town of Jefferson, and about thirty miles distant from Valle Crucis.

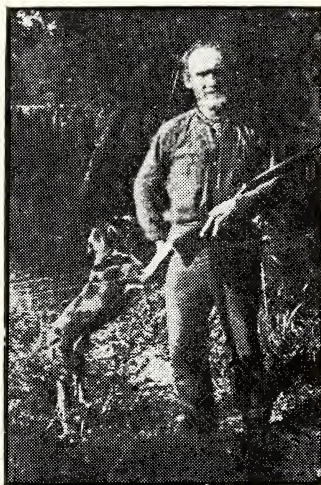
All this time his family remained, where he had established them on his first coming to Valle Crucis,



Mission House built in 1896-7.

in the little mountain town of Elk Park, on the narrow-gauge railroad running from Johnson City, Tennessee, to the Cranberry Iron Mine, in Mitchell County. Fortunately Mr. Jones had an income from funds held in trust for him, and this income assured his family of a support independent of the modest salary paid him as missionary. He was a very unselfish man, and spent little money on himself, except the necessary expenses of traveling and of caring for his good horse John. But he was open-handed as the day, and poverty is ever present in

the remote mountains. Probably little of Mr. Jones's small salary found its way into the domestic treasury, and Mrs. Jones's scanty supplies were not safe from Mr. Jones's indiscriminate charity. It is said that in looking over her monthly account at the village store Mrs. Jones was once surprised to find an item of fifty pairs of yarn socks. Upon inquiry, it appeared that Mr. Jones made a practice of leaving home with his saddle-bags stuffed full of yarn socks, such as used to be knit by the country people, and bartered at the store for merchandise. Whenever he found a poor person needing socks—and there were many such—he would have a pair ready. And when he had no money to pay for them he would have them charged to the family account!



Andy Luske, the Bear Hunter.

## CHAPTER VI.

### Beaver Creek.

Watauga County, in the heart of the Blue Ridge, is wholly mountainous, with the Grandfather, one of the noblest domes of that lofty section, lying upon its southern border; with the narrow valleys of the Watauga River and its affluents running through its middle from south to northwest, and the valley of the South Fork of New River beginning along its eastern side.

Ashe County lies north and northeast of Watauga, and somewhat west of the ridge of the great mountain chain. It has here and there beautiful mountains rising above the surrounding country, but is much less broken and precipitous in its general formation, and presents to the eye great billowy hills, heaving up their broad sides and spreading out their spacious summits to the sky, with cattle standing knee-deep in the rich grass of their hillside pastures, white patches of buckwheat in the new clearings, and the valleys dark-green with rustling corn. The North Fork of New River rises somewhere near its western border, running with a general northeasterly course towards the Virginia line; and the South Fork, coming in from Watauga County, runs northerly along its eastern side. It is a beautiful county and one of the finest grazing sections anywhere to be found. Jefferson, the county-seat, near the center of the county, has its broad main street set with double rows of cherry trees on each side, which in this fine, cool mountain climate, show an extraordinary growth and productiveness seldom seen so far south. Five miles from Jefferson, on the road towards Boone, the county-seat of Watauga, the road crosses Beaver Creek. A large academy building on the summit of a high hill used to form a conspicuous landmark, and on the other

side of the creek was a large country store, a mill, and two handsome residences, with other buildings in sight in the near distance. The two principal houses are the homes of Rufus and William Hamilton, and their brother Hege Hamilton's house is one of those seen not far off. Passing along from Wilkesboro on my way towards the residence of the late Dr. Joseph O. Wilcox, some ten or twelve miles to the west, I crossed Beaver Creek, June 21, 1894, and was so much struck with the fine location, the extensive prospect, the high, rolling hills, the well conditioned cattle, and the general appearance of thrift and prosperity, implying intelligence and industry beyond what is common in the mountain country, that I made some inquiries about Beaver Creek, which confirmed my first favorable impression. I learned, moreover, from Mrs. Wilcox, that Mrs. Rufus Hamilton was a Churchwoman and an old pupil of St. Mary's School, Raleigh.

When I sent Mr. Jones to Valle Crucis I asked him to visit Beaver Creek, and to see if anything could be done there. The year 1895 had been devoted chiefly to Valle Crucis and Bakersville; and the last months of 1895, and the first month or two of 1896, to his effort to raise money for his work. But he had kept up periodical services at several points in Ashe County; and at Beaver Creek had succeeded in arousing much interest, being cordially supported by Mrs. Rufus Hamilton and her good husband, and having made friends with the miller and his family and a circle of other country people.

After his return to his mission field about the first of March, 1896, he gave special attention to Beaver Creek. In that neighborhood Mr. Rufus Hamilton and Mr. Hege Hamilton, both men of intelligence, wealth, and prominence, had signified their purpose of coming into the Church with their households. Over beyond the South Fork of New River, towards Reddies River Gap, lived a prominent family by the



name of Bowie. Mr. Jones had held services in their neighborhood, where now has been built a church called Trinity Church, Glendale Springs. Over on the North Fork of New River was also the family of Dr. Wilcox, already mentioned, but too distant to co-operate in the work at Beaver Creek.

The Church, as we understand it, had been utterly unknown in and around Beaver Creek. There was a large Baptist congregation a few miles off, known as "Buffalo Church," and there were also a considerable number of Methodists, among whom were many prominent and intelligent people. But the "Episcopal Church" was utterly unknown to the vast majority of the people until the advent of Milnor Jones. He had set forth very plainly from the first his conception of the history, character, and claims of the Church, and its essential superiority to all modern organizations. He had very widely distributed copies of the Prayer Book, and he had not only drawn large congregations, but it began to be seen that he was bringing into the Church some of the best and most respected people of the section, among the poor, as well as among the more wealthy. And, after his fashion, he had not failed to give very free expression to his unfavorable opinion of the Baptists and Methodists, and his repudiation of their claims to be adequate representatives of the true Church of Christ, either in their teaching or organization.

When he resumed his regular services and visits early in 1896, he resolved upon a bold move. He was always inclined to the sensational and spectacular. As in his early days in Polk County, he had rented the very court-house and opened a mission school in it, so now he rented the large academy building, standing on the summit of a hill overlooking Beaver Creek, and begged me to send him two teachers that he might open a school for all the children of the neighborhood. I sent him a young man,



John C. Seagle, a Postulant, one of a Henderson County family who had come into the Church under Mr. Jones's ministry about 1885. At the same time I sent also a young lady teacher, Miss Lou Smith, of Scotland Neck. As it had been customary to hold religious services in this building, which we had now leased for two years, I was careful to have it given out that all denominations of Christian people were free to use the academy for public worship on any Sunday except that on which Mr. Jones had his monthly appointment, and on such Sunday as I might appoint for a visitation.

All this, especially as interpreted by Mr. Jones's preaching, was sufficiently disagreeable and irritating to the Methodists and Baptists of the neighborhood. And Mr. Jones's enthusiastic friends among the more uneducated people began to assert that "Brother Jones and his Pr'ar Books would soon break up Buffalo." In the midst of this growing irritation came the announcement that on the third Sunday in June the Bishop would visit Beaver Creek **"for the purpose of organizing and establishing the Church"** at that point. What that meant exactly was but imperfectly understood, even by Mr. Jones's own candidates for confirmation; but they gathered from him that it would be something great indeed. He did not fail to magnify the office and work of the Bishop, and June 21st was looked forward to with great and joyful expectation by those interested in his work, with very lively interest by the people of the neighborhood generally, and with an apprehension of some mysterious and unknown evil by the enthusiastic members of "Buffalo" and other local congregations. They got an impression from Mr. Jones's representations of an Episcopal visitation that it boded disaster to all "opposers."

June 16, 1896, I went up from Greensboro to Wilkesboro, where I was met, according to agreement, by Mr. Jones, that I might visit his Ashe and

Watauga County Missions. He had the same stout buggy and team which had served us so well the year before in our Valle Crusis and Bakersville journeys. We drove that afternoon only part of the way, spending the night at the house of Mr. Owens, near Miller's Creek, Wilkes County. At a school-house near by we had a service, and I preached. The next day we drove up through Reddies River Gap, across the Blue Ridge, into Ashe County, to the house of Dr. Joseph O. Wilcox, on the North Fork of New River. Thursday, June 18th, we had a service at Willow Grove School-House, near Creston, in the forenoon, and at night in Piney Grove Church, near Dr. Wilcox's. Friday we drove into Jefferson, and in the afternoon went on to the house of Mr. Rufus A. Hamilton, at Beaver Creek, where I had an appointment that night, as well as for Sunday afternoon.

Quite a large congregation assembled in the academy for our 8 o'clock service, and I was conscious of a subdued excitement pervading the assembly, which I attributed to the general expectation of the novel and important service of confirmation on Sunday morning, a number of the candidates being present at this preliminary service. Confirmation had never been administered in this community before, and there was a natural interest felt in it. At this Friday night service I baptized a girl, one of the candidates, and preached, as I had done at my first service in Bakersville, on the nature and necessity of Conversion.

After the service I noticed that all our friends and special adherents gathered around me as I came out of the academy, and accompanied me all the way to Mr. Rufus Hamilton's house. They were talking very earnestly, though I could not quite make out the subject of their conversation. I heard one of them say to another, "I don't think there will be any trouble. Cal. Graybeal was there tonight and heard

the Bishop preach, and he said he thinks the Bishop is all right," or something to that general effect. I had no idea who Cal. Graybeal might be, or why he should be pleased or displeased. Indeed, but for what followed I should not have remembered this conversation overheard Friday night.

Saturday we spent making some visits in the neighborhood, especially to such persons as were to be confirmed the next day. Every one seemed much interested, and there seemed a general spirit of eager anticipation, coupled with an undercurrent of uncertainty and excitement, which I thought not unnatural. Mr. Jones was eager and confident, and busy in various preparations for our service.

June 21st, the **Third Sunday after Trinity**, was a fair and beautiful day. Soon after breakfast, looking from my window in Mr. Rufus Hamilton's house, across the narrow valley of Beaver Creek, lying below, and then up to where the academy crowned the summit of the opposite hill, three or four hundred yards distant, I observed a number of horses tied to the fence and their owners standing about the academy door. From time to time others would ride up, tie their horses to the fence, and join the group. I thought with myself that our service was attracting even greater attention than I had anticipated. By 9 o'clock there seemed to be at least twenty or thirty men assembled, and their number continually increased by the arrival of others.

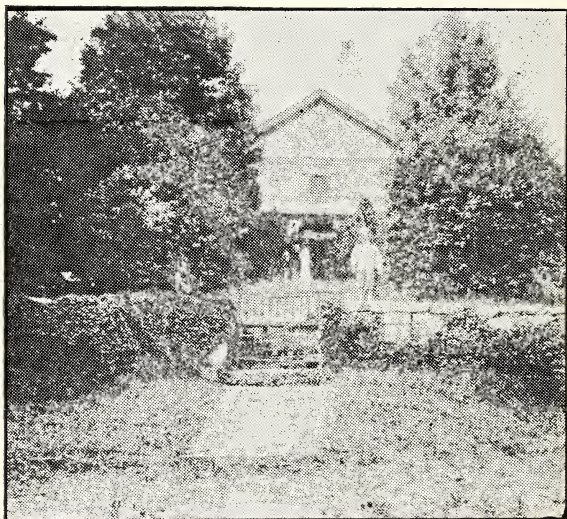
We had an appointment at 11 o'clock the next day some twelve miles off, near Elk Cross Roads, on the border of Watauga County. Mr. Jones's horse John had been a little sick the evening before, with what Mr. Jones feared might be, as he termed it, "water-farcy," from drinking too freely of cold spring water while overheated. Feeling some anxiety on this account, I went out to the barn about 9 o'clock to see how the horse was doing. In the barnyard I found Mr. Rufus Hamilton in close conference with

his brother William. I thought they looked toward me from time to time, and seemed to be in some trouble or uncertainty about me. I therefore joined them and asked what might be the trouble. They hesitated and seemed quite reluctant to speak, intimating that they were unwilling to let me know the situation. Upon being pressed for an explanation, they said that they were very deeply mortified, as well as indignant, that I should be so treated on my first visit to their neighborhood; that the crowd at the academy had sent representatives to them to say that I would not be allowed to preach there in accordance with my appointment. They declared that they were amazed and indignant, and at a loss how to proceed. Mr. William Hamilton, who was a Methodist, said he would be very glad to have me preach at his house, and that perhaps it would be best that I should do this. They seemed to think it useless to attempt to keep my appointment. I thanked Mr. William Hamilton for his offer, and told him there was nothing that they could do, and that I must take the matter into my own hands.

I felt at once that it would not do for me to yield to such an insolent message and allow these men to frighten me into abandoning my appointment. They would at once declare that they had had no real purpose of interfering with me, and that I had been scared off. At the same time I felt that it would not be becoming to engage in a foolish brawl on Sunday morning. I determined, therefore, to proceed quietly with my purpose, as if nothing had happened, and not to desist until stopped by actual force. This would prevent any imputation of cowardice on my part, and would put them in the position of rioters and lawbreakers, while I believed I could so manage it as to avoid any unseemly violence and wrangling. I therefore returned to my room, went carefully over the situation in my own mind, and determined

on the course of action which I thought proper to pursue.

A little after 10 o'clock I called Mr. John Seagle, my missionary teacher in charge of our school, and asked him to prepare to accompany me, and to take a large basket, with the vessels and the elements for the Holy Communion, and our supply of Prayer Books. I would not allow Mr. Jones or Mr. Hamilton, or any of our friends, to go along, but charged them to remain where they were, and to stop all others who might come up, unless I should send for them. I felt that Mr. Seagle would do only what I should tell him to do. I feared I could not restrain our other friends from resenting any injurious words or actions offered me, and I was determined to avoid any discreditable contention.



The steps where the Bishop's "knees felt weak."



Followed by Mr. Seagle with the basket, I started to the academy. It stood out in full view from Mr. Hamilton's residence, and by this time the crowd of men had greatly increased, numbering certainly a good many more than fifty. As I descended the steps, looking across the narrow valley to the clustering crowd, I felt a distinct weakness in my knees, as if they would give way under me, and with an inward suffusion of shame I said to myself, "I wonder if I am a coward and afraid to face those men." But then it came into my mind that it was of no great consequence how my knees felt, so long as my will made them carry me forward, and I knew I had not the least inclination to pause or go back. This thought comforted me, and I went on across the foot-bridge, over Beaver Creek, and up the long slope of the hill towards the academy. As I began to mount the hill the feeling of weakness departed from my knees, and all inward perturbation of spirit passed off. I felt only a kind of wonder that the men I was approaching should be so foolish and ignorant. I was conscious of no sentiment of anger or ill will, but only of a kind of wonder that they should know no better.

As I drew nearer, they made no sound, but simply gathered in a compact mass before and around the little elevation in front of the entrance to the building, so that I could not approach it. I walked up and addressed them as if they had assembled to join in my service, "Good morning, gentlemen." I said: "I have an appointment to preach in this building at 11 o'clock, so I must go in and prepare for the service." When I bade them good-morning, I heard a sort of inarticulate murmur of response; but when I had ceased speaking there was silence. Then some one said, "We have concluded not to have any preaching here today." "Yes," I said, "but I am going to preach here." "No," was the response; "there is going to be no preaching here today."



“What do you mean?” I said. “Do you claim to own this building, that you refuse to allow me to use it?” A voice from the back of the crowd called out, “Do you own it?” “No,” I replied, “I do not own it, but I have the right to use it. I have the authority from those who do own it.” “Well, we are not going to allow anybody to have any service here today,” the first speaker said, and this sentiment was confirmed in various ways by a number of the crowd. “Gentlemen,” I said, “what do you mean by this outrageous and unlawful behavior, gathering here and forcibly preventing me from entering and using a building which I have a right to use?” A man who seemed all along, with one or two others, to dominate and lead the crowd, replied: “We have nothing against you, but we don’t like Mr. Jones. He has abused our denomination and he has abused us, and we understand that you preach the same doctrine. Don’t you preach the same doctrine that he does?” “I do not propose to be examined by you as to what I preach,” I replied. “I preach the truth, and it is the worse for you if you do not receive it. I am going to preach here today, unless you stop me by force. Do you mean to say that you will forcibly prevent me?” I had made up my mind that if they should say they intended to use force I would proceed no further. A crowd of men so gathered together and declaring that they would use force to keep me out of the building would in law be guilty of a riot and an assault, and it was only my purpose to go so far as to put them clearly in the wrong, and to show that I had not failed to keep my appointment from any weakness or timidity. When I asked them if they intended to stop me by force, they made no reply whatever. I thought then, and I think now, that their leaders had taken legal advice and had been told how to avoid, if possible, any overt lawless act. When they thus stood silent, refusing to declare their intention, I said: “Now,

gentlemen, I am going into this house and keep my appointment, unless you stop me by force." Turning to Mr. Seagle, I asked him to give me the key of the academy. He handed it to me. "Please let me pass through to the door," I said, and endeavored to press my way between them. Thereupon the men nearest me, as I tried to make my way into the crowd, put out their hands and pushed me back. When they had thus forced me back, I desisted at once. "Now, gentlemen, you have gone to the extent of committing an assault upon me and stopping me by force. I cannot contend with a hundred men. But I call upon all persons present to witness that I protest against this action as an outrage against the constitution and laws of the State of North Carolina. I am glad to believe that your action does not represent the feeling of the best and most intelligent people of this community. As you will not allow me to preach here, I shall go down and preach at Mr. William Hamilton's. He is not a member of the Church of which I am a minister, but he is a Christian man and does not sympathize with such proceedings as these. I invite you all to come down to the service at Mr. Hamilton's. If you will come down and join in our worship, and listen to the preaching, perhaps it may help you to feel better than you do now." I thereupon left them, and Mr. Seagle and I went down the hill and proceeded to the house of Mr. William Hamilton. Here quite a number of people had assembled, and much excitement prevailed. A one-armed man (i. e., with one arm paralyzed), named John Hardin, on horseback, was moving about among the people, brandishing his one arm, calling on all those present to resent the outrage committed at the academy, and declaring that if no one would accompany him he would go up and "clean up" the lot, single-handed. I assured them that I was unwilling to have any disturbance made on my account, and asked them all to join me

in the service which I was about to hold. It was impossible, under the circumstances, to have any service save of the simplest character. I therefore had only the confirmation office and a sermon. Kneeling on the grass, under the shade of the maple trees in front of Mr. William Hamilton's house, the nineteen candidates received the Laying On of Hands. I made a short address to them, and then, after a chapter in the Bible, a hymn, the Creed, and a few collects, I preached from Acts viii:12.

One reason I had for not taking any people of the place with me when I went up to the academy was that I preferred not to know who the men in the mob were. I was told, however, that the leaders were two sons of the Baptist preacher at "Buffalo Church," named Duncan, and a prominent Methodist by the name of Calvin Graybeal; but as this was only hearsay to me, I could not have been called on to name them in any criminal proceedings. I took it for granted that they would be proceeded against by the proper authorities for their riot and assault, and I had made up my mind in that case to attend the trial and to ask that sentence should be suspended. But they were not presented by the grand jury, and the Solicitor in that district, who was a prominent Baptist, sent no bill against them, so far as I heard. The best people of the community published in the papers a denunciation of their action; and a counter-plea appeared, saying that they had been led to it by anger, because they had been refused the use of the academy for their accustomed religious services, **which was wholly false**; and there the matter ended.

Monday morning, our horse being quite recovered, Mr. Jones and I drove to the neighborhood of Elk Cross Roads, on the South Fork of New River, where we had an appointment at 11 o'clock. We found a number of people awaiting, who, however, expressed much surprise at seeing us drive up.

“Why! You have come, sure enough!” “Yes,” I said. “Didn’t you expect me? Do I not usually come when I say I will?” “Yes,” they replied, “but the mail-carrier came along a little while ago and told us that you would not be here today. He said that Cal Graybeal had beat up the Bishop so bad that he could not travel!” But we had our service, and I baptized an infant, and preached. At a private house in the neighborhood later in the day I had a service and confirmed a young man. The next day we were in St. Luke’s Church, Boone, where I preached and administered the Holy Communion.

From Wednesday, June 24th, to Sunday, the 28th, I was with Mr. Jones at Valle Crucis. Saturday, at the residence of Timothy Townsend, on Clark’s Creek, Timothy lying in a critical condition from having a tree fall on him, I administered the Holy Communion to the injured man and seven members of his family. Sunday, in St. John’s Church, I confirmed seven persons and administered the Holy Communion.

I next met Mr. Jones at Bakersville, where we had a service, **in the court-house**, the fifth Sunday after Trinity, July 5th, and at night in the country near by we had another service. The following day we had a conference with our people of Bakersville, and took steps towards buying a lot and building a church.

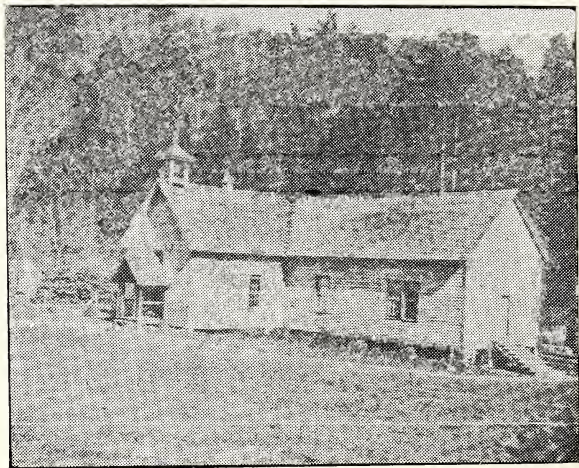
Before getting back to Valle Crucis, Mr. Jones had another perilous adventure in crossing a swollen stream; but this story is already too long.

On leaving Beaver Creek, I had promised to return some time in July. But the excessive rains during the second week in July made mountain travel so difficult and dangerous that I had to give up that plan.

**The seventh Sunday after Trinity**, September 27th, I was again at Beaver Creek. The academy

being not a very convenient place for the office of the Holy Communion, I had a morning service at the residence of Mr. Rufus Hamilton, confirmed three persons presented by Mr. Jones, and administered the Holy Communion to thirty-three persons. In the afternoon we had service and preached in the academy. The same day, I authorized the formation of a mission congregation under the canons, called "The Church of St. Simon the Zealot," and myself entered upon the parish register of this mission the names of all the communicants of the Church in Ashe County.

I was never able to make another visitation during Mr. Jones's ministry.



Chapel and school-house at Valle Crucis, built after Mr. Jones had left.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### The Ravelled Ends.

I have come to the end of my story of my Deacon and Missionary, Milnor Jones, so far as my personal experience goes. And, indeed, I have really come to the end of his effective work. He continued in the District of Asheville until near the end of the year 1897, and his name remained on the Asheville clergy list until his death. But he did little or no regular service after 1897, so far as I know, though I believe he officiated irregularly and for brief periods in different places in California and Washington. I learned, only after his death, that for several years he had lived in Henderson County and Hendersonville, in great need and discomfort. I had heard a year or two before his death that some one had seen him at Mr. Seagle's, in Henderson County, and that he had sent me an affectionate message; but I understood that he had merely been visiting the Seagles, and I had no idea that he had been there for any length of time, but thought he was on the Pacific coast.

As has before been said, he was at all times of a peculiar and unaccountable character, and seemed, after periods of great energy and activity, to come to a state of physical exhaustion, with a corresponding intellectual and spiritual **loss of tone**, so to speak. Such a condition seemed to be coming on him towards the end of 1897. He suffered very distressing attacks of the physical malady mentioned in connection with his ministry in Polk County. During one of such attacks in Ashe County in 1897, when he was at a country house far distant from medical advice or remedies, being in apparent danger of his life, as well as suffering intensely, he had to use large doses of whiskey—the only means at hand by which he could find relief—not merely from



pain, but from his very critical condition. Of course, in the midst of many malicious hearts and tongues, it was reported all over the countryside that he was drunk, as, indeed, he was, for some hours, under the influence of the dose he had taken. But I made careful inquiry into the facts and the circumstances, and I am thoroughly convinced that the case was exactly as I have stated, and that the taking of the whiskey was solely as a necessary medicine, and not at all the indulgence of a vicious appetite. I knew him for years, and have been with him for weeks at a time, day and night. At no time during those years do I believe that he was otherwise than entirely sober and temperate in drink and diet. But in 1897 he was in a state of depression. His work had become more or less a burden instead of a joyous exercise. He had a feeling that he would be better out on the Pacific coast. At the end of that year he removed to California.

The only sight I had of him after 1897 was in October, 1901, during the General Convention in San Francisco. I had a letter from him, saying that he was living in San Rafael, not far distant from San Francisco, and begging me to come out and see him. Bishop Horner had a similar invitation, and we promised to go out and spend a Saturday afternoon with him. I think it was October 12th. He met us at the railway station in San Rafael and took us to his house.

I do not remember the names of all his children, but they were most of them very singular or unusual names. His eldest boy and girl, Clement (after his father), and Mary, fared very well; but then I remember Boniface and Xavier, Saint Augustine, and Blandina. As we drove from the station with him I asked after his children, and learned that he had an infant born since I had seen him. "What have you named the baby?" I asked. "I have named her after David's mother, the wife of Jesse," he re-

plied. "Bishop Horner," I said, "what name had David's mother?" "Indeed, I do not know," said Bishop Horner. "Her name was Nitzenith," said Mr. Jones. "I once read some account of her, and of an incident in her married life; and I admired her so much, and her wisdom and goodness in dealing with her husband and her servant, that I named my little girl after her, Nitzenith. Women had a hard time in those old days."\* Little Nitzenith must be nearly a grown young woman by this; she was a little girl of one or two years at that time.

He told me that, shortly after leaving me, when he was living somewhere near the coast in northern California, there was in his neighborhood the remnant of a tribe of Digger Indians. Desiring to do something to help them, he undertook to have a school for their children, and carried on this work among them for some time—I think he said for nearly a year. At the end of the year he was making his plans to remove to some other place. By way of bringing his work among them to a happy conclusion, he sent a small sum of money to some friend in Sacramento and bought Christmas gifts for the children. At Christmas he had a parting entertainment for his Indian pupils and friends, and wound up his celebration and his work among them by baptizing the whole tribe, fifty or sixty in all, from "Long-haired Bob," the chief, to the youngest baby in the tribe, named Jones, after himself!

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\* I have made many inquiries of scholars and divines as to the name of David's mother, but without success. Milnor Jones was the only man I ever met who knew her name. Finally, I mentioned to my old college friend, the late Dr. Samuel Hart, the account Milnor Jones had given of his naming his child after Jesse's wife. He said he thought he remembered a note in one of Baring-Gould's books bearing on the subject. On going to his book-case, however, it appeared that the volume he sought was lacking, and he remembered nothing as to the name. A few weeks after my return home, I received a postal card from him in these words:

Kal. Mart.

Baring-Gould's book has reappeared. He tells the story in Latin, and says that David's mother was named Nitzenith, on the authority of the Midrash.

S. H.

On leaving him that evening, to return to San Francisco, he presented me with an Indian basket, which he said had been made and given to him by "Long-haired Bob."

This is my story of Milnor Jones, Deacon and Missionary.









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